

MANCHESTER UTD.

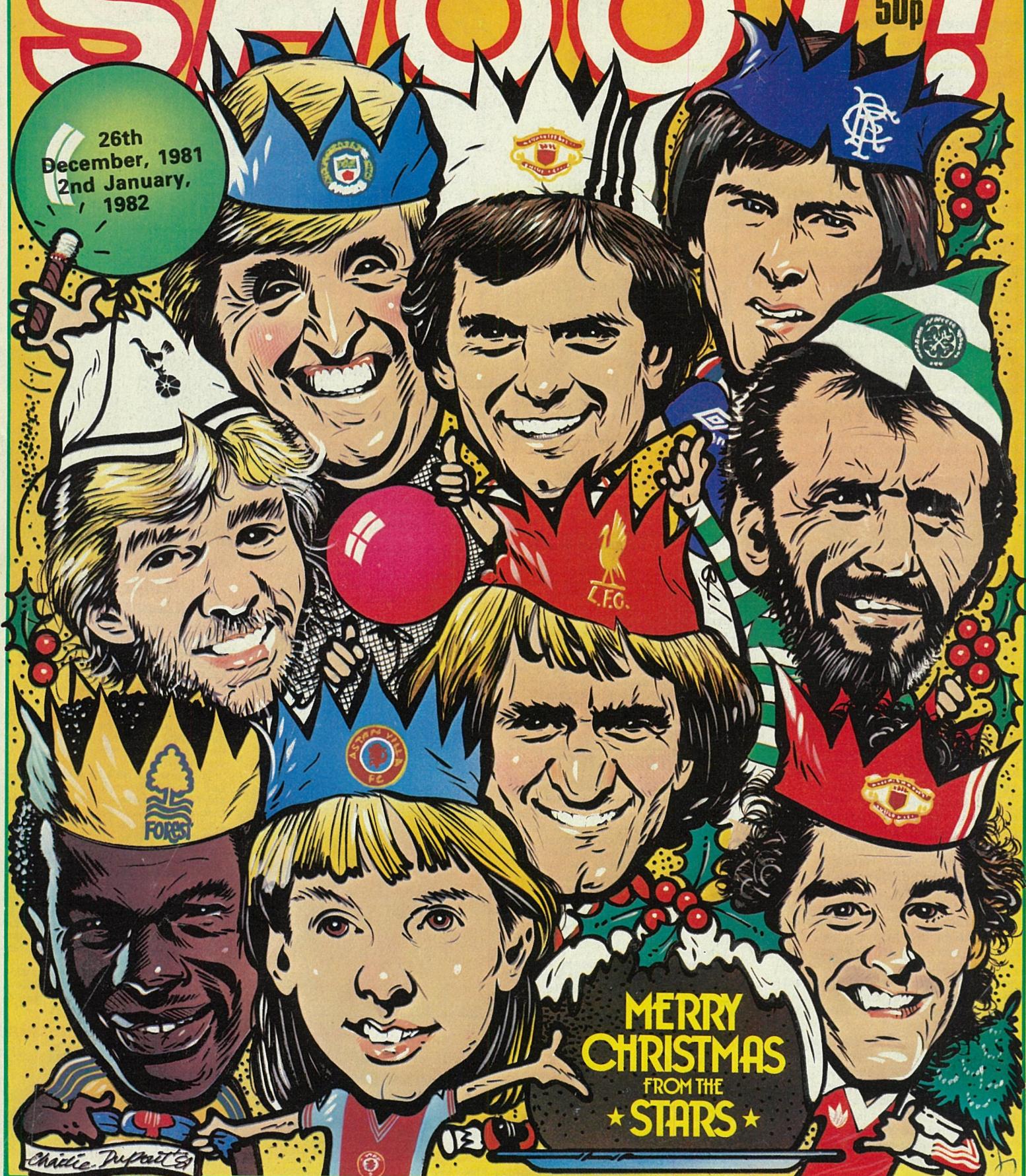
TEAM
GROUP

80 SUPER PAGES

SHOOT!

50p

26th
December, 1981
2nd January,
1982



MERRY
CHRISTMAS
FROM THE
★ STARS ★

Charlie Dupont

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1981 a great year for football

THE prophets of doom said football would be fortunate to survive in 1981. They were wrong.

Christmas festivities bring the curtain down on a remarkable year in which the great game has not only shrugged off the serious threat to its future, but has actually managed to make progress in several significant departments.

The greatest achievement of all is the progress of England, Northern Ireland and Scotland to the World Cup Finals.

The new points system, offering three points for a win, has encouraged more attacking football in the League — and more goals.

Almost every other headline dealt with soccer hooliganism in 1980. This year has not been entirely free from louts but there has been a significant improvement in behaviour.

Bryan Robson's transfer to Manchester United shattered the British transfer record. It promised to send the transfer system spiralling to even dizzier proportions. Most

SHOOT! view!

clubs chose not to follow United's policy, thus bringing some commonsense to a system that was getting out of hand.

At this time last year Swansea were third in the Second Division. They went on to win promotion and take the First Division by storm in the first half of the season.

John Toshack's history making success is a marvellous tribute to one of the game's brightest young managers.

Notts County have also defied the critics who said they would not survive in the First Division.

Liverpool and Ipswich Town won glittering European trophies, Bob Paisley's men winning the European Cup for the third time.

Individuals stole honours too. John Bond lifted Manchester City from the burning embers of the Allison regime to an F.A. Cup Final appearance. Bryan Robson emerged as the best England discovery since Kevin Keegan. Jim McLean, Dundee United's long serving manager, guided his team to Scottish League Cup glory and an appearance in the Scottish Cup Final.

Jim Gregory, Q.P.R.'s ambitious chairman, bravely pioneered the League's first all-weather pitch, and Ipswich pair Frans Thijssen and John Wark achieved the 'double' by gaining Footballer of the Year and Player of the Year awards.

Yes, a good year for football, arguably the most progressive for ten years.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE STARS



'BOOTIFUL GIFT'
Cyrille Regis (W.B.A.)

IT will be a real family Christmas for Beverley and I this year. We have a young son Robert who is one, so it will be nice to see how he takes to it all.

My parents and Beverley's will be with us so we'll be having a traditional lunch and plenty of laughs.

I usually give cards to most of the Albion players and we'll be giving presents to Tony Godden, our goalkeeper, and his wife as we're very friendly with them.

The present that sticks out in my mind as a youngster was a pair of football boots from my parents. I really took care of them — in fact I used to think they were too 'bootiful' to get muddy!

'A TOUGH TEST' Billy Bonds (West Ham)

THIS Christmas the whole West Ham team will be visiting a home for handicapped children. We will probably be travelling on Christmas Day afternoon as we have a game at Swansea on Boxing Day. I'll still have time to enjoy the morning with my family, though.

I particularly like the build-up to Christmas and Lyn and I always take our two young daughters Claire, 7, and Katie, 2½, to see Father Christmas.

On the footballing side we always seem to do well over Christmas but we face Swansea and Ipswich this time so it will be a tough test of our ability.



TRADITIONALLY Christmas marks a crucial time in the footballing calendar as a clear pattern emerges both at the top and bottom of the League tables.

But Christmas is not all "business as usual" for the players. While a full League programme on Boxing Day means footballers have to keep a watchful eye on the turkey and Christmas pudding, there is still time for some fun.

SHOOT spoke to some of the stars of the game about Christmas and what it means to them. Here's what they said.

'BOXING DAY CLASH' Frank Worthington

FOR some reason Boxing Day seems to mean boxing match to me — and I'll bet Preston's Tommy Booth knows what I mean.

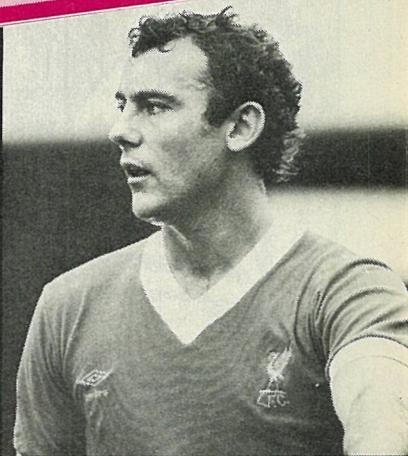
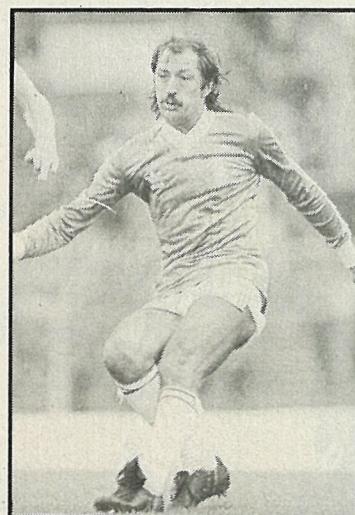
I can remember playing for Huddersfield at Maine Road in 1970 when Tommy was at Manchester City.

He was marking me, and to be honest we were both lucky not to get sent-off. We had a fair old ding-dong, which I'm afraid got a bit bad tempered.

Five years later was another violent Christmas. I was with Leicester playing Leeds at Elland Road, and Trevor Cherry accidentally broke my nose trying to bicycle kick the ball as I was heading it.

All in all these days I'm glad to get to the New Year still in one piece!

Now read about Frank's amazing footballing family on pages 22-23.



'A SPECIAL OCCASION'
Ray Kennedy (Liverpool)

ON Christmas morning I'll be training with the rest of the Liverpool lads in preparation for the game against Manchester City at Anfield on Boxing Day — unless I'm suspended after my sending off at Arsenal.

We won't be opening the presents at home until I get back at about 3pm and then we'll have a traditional Christmas dinner and settle down to watch TV.

This year will be a bit special for me and my wife, Jennifer, as our second child Dale has never seen a Christmas before.

We've also got a four-year-old daughter Cara, so she'll no doubt be awake very early.

I try and buy the family presents a long time in advance in order to avoid the rush. I bought Jennifer's in Amsterdam a few weeks ago when we played AZ Alkmaar in Holland.

I always appreciate presents from fans — many of them are so generous — and I always put greetings cards up as well.

The present I remember getting nearly every year as a boy was believe it or not, a football. I always used to wear the previous year's out.

Editor Peter Stewart and the entire SHOOT Staff wish all readers, players, managers, directors and everyone connected with the game,

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY 1982

'WEIGHT-WATCHER'

Peter Withe (Villa)

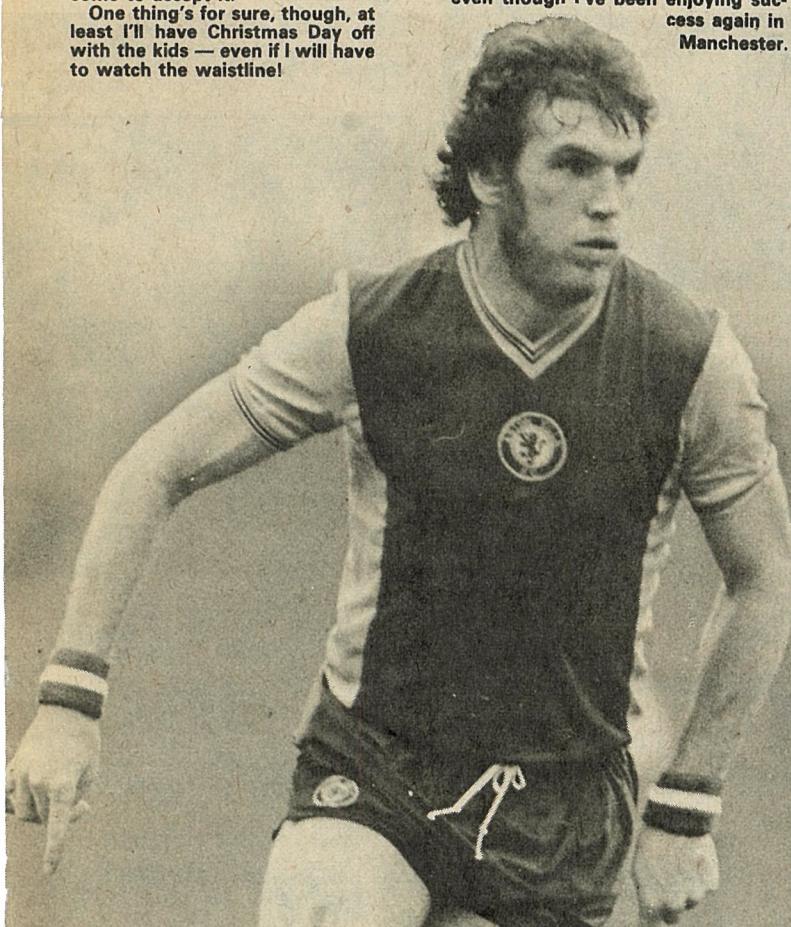
I'LL be having a hectic time over Christmas as I have three youngsters who are a bit of a handful. Jason (10), Stephen (4) and Gareth (2½) will keep my wife, Kathy, and I busy.

It looks as though I may be suspended for a couple of games in the run-up to Christmas. We've got Southampton at home on Boxing Day so I'll be training as usual.

Over the years I have either been away around Christmas with away fixtures or else involved in home games so for a footballer that particular time of the year is always governed by the job.

In that respect it's a bit disappointing and nothing special but we all come to accept it.

One thing's for sure, though, at least I'll have Christmas Day off with the kids — even if I will have to watch the waistline!



'A BATH FOR THE BOSS'

Gerry Gow (Man. City)

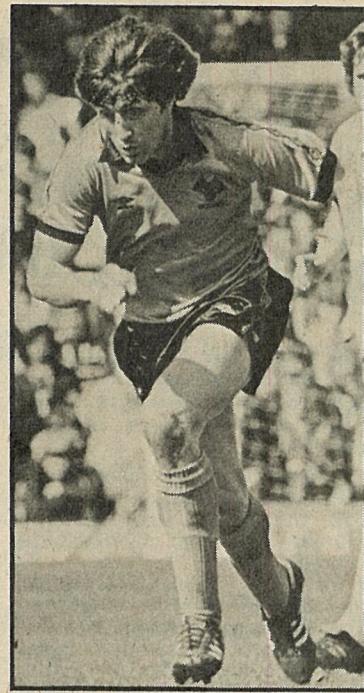
MY happiest Christmas must have been 1978 — playing for Bristol City when we beat Coventry 5-0 at Ashton Gate on Boxing Day.

It took us to sixth place in the First Division, and we thought it was the result which marked the club's arrival as a real force in the top flight.

The atmosphere in the dressing room afterwards was full of Christmas spirit — we threw manager Alan Dicks into the plunge bath!

We'd had a long fight getting the club out of the Second Division and keeping it in the top flight, and it seemed we had finally made it.

What has happened at Ashton Gate since then has left me very sad — even though I've been enjoying success again in Manchester.



'FESTIVE FOG'

John Richards (Wolves)

MY outstanding Christmas footballing memory is one of disappointment. I'd been told that because of injury to Hugh Curran and Bobby Gould I would make my League debut for Wolves against Coventry on December 27th, 1969.

I remember being extremely excited. I could hardly eat my turkey on Christmas Day. But to my horror, I woke up on the morning of the biggest day in my soccer career, opened the curtains and could see nothing but fog!

The game against Coventry was postponed, Hugh and Bobby recovered, and I had to wait another two months for my debut.

Wolves will be training on Christmas Day as we play Nottingham Forest the following day. I'll be having a glass of wine with my meal but I'll probably skip the pudding. My celebrations won't really begin until Boxing Day evening.

My family, who still live in my home town of Warrington, and my wife Pam's family will be round for Christmas lunch. Pam will cook the food and, of course, my daughters Kim, 7, and Abbie, 5, will be there.



'WALSALL'S FANTASY CUP'

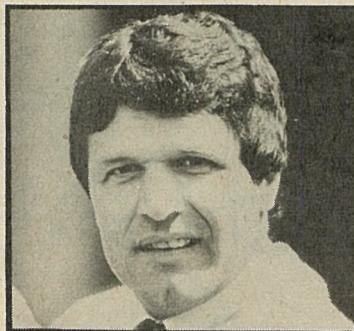
Jasper Carrot

I THINK 1982 is going to be a terrific year. Birmingham City will be in Europe — if we can arrange a visit to Lourdes — Walsall will win the F.A. Cup (Fantasy Association) and Brian Flynn of Leeds will be Subbuteo Footballer of the Year.

Sheffield Wednesday will be sponsored by Wall's and will change their name to Ice Cream Sundae and Bristol City and Rovers will amalgamate and become known as Close Knockers!

I only hope England beat the Cameiros in Spain without FIFA ordering them to play on the sand in barefoot and if Scotland's players can keep their kilts on in the rowing boats without the use of stimulants they should get a draw against El Salvador.

As for the Irish, I thought it was a bit stupid of them to buy the grazing rights at Loftus Road for specialised training. All in fun — so have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



'CITY KOPPED IT'

John Toshack (Swansea)

ANFIELD on Boxing Day, a full house 46,000 crowd, the Kop singing Christmas carols, and Liverpool thrashing Manchester City 4-1 to go top of the League. What better Christmas could you want?

It was in 1974, and was special for me because I had just got back into Liverpool's side after missing most of the season with a thigh injury.

I finally got back into the first team determined to show Bob Paisley he had been wrong because he had been thinking of letting me go.

I had scored in my two previous comeback games against Birmingham and Luton — and we played so well against City that I knew I had won my place back.

Brian Hall scored twice, Steve Heighway got one, and I was lucky enough to score our fourth. Colin Bell scored for Manchester City. A fabulous game.

'BEATEN BY THE DULUX DOG'

Garth Crooks (Spurs)

I'M going back to the family home in Stoke to see my parents and four sisters this Christmas. It is the only time of year we all get together and have a bit of lunacy enjoying the festivities.

I remember getting a most unusual gift from a friend a couple of years ago — it was a toy 'Dulux' dog. It all stemmed from the time I was asked to open a shop in Stoke.

On the morning of the day I was due to open it I had a phone call to say my services were no longer required. I was told the ceremony was to be performed by a Dulux dog instead! I couldn't believe it, what a cheek!

Anyway, the one I got as a present had a note attached reading: "Better luck next time!"

Christmas is always special for the fans and although players have got to show their professionalism it is difficult and the mood can sometimes communicate itself on to the pitch.

CHESTERFIELD's long-serving utility player Andy Kowalski has suffered some bad luck. He missed applying for a Football League loyalty award after he made 200 appearances for the club and was told he would have to wait until he had played another 100 games. He reached the 300 total against Huddersfield this season... but the awards have now been discontinued, so he will have nothing to mark his faithful service.

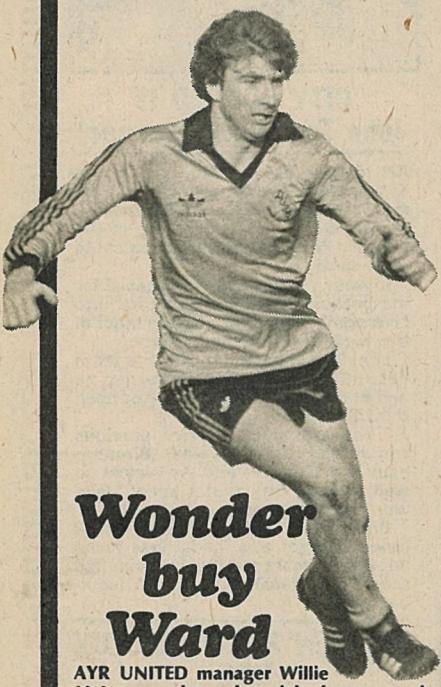
MANCHESTER UNITED's Jimmy Nicholl and **Watford**'s Gerry Armstrong haven't missed a Northern Ireland international for more than four years.

Capped 40 times in all, defender Nicholl has totalled 36 consecutive international outings since May, 1977, while striker Armstrong, honoured 34 times to date, has been a non-stop Northern Ireland regular since November of the same year.

HULL CITY may be struggling, but striker Les Mutrie is still catching the eye with his goals.

Mutrie was signed from non-League Blyth Spartans last year after impressing in the F.A. Cup against Hull.

He has already averaged a goal every two games this season, despite losing his striking partner Keith Edwards, and several clubs from higher Divisions have been to look at him.



Wonder buy Ward

AYR UNITED manager Willie McLean reckons he picked up a real bargain when he successfully persuaded Dundee United to part with striker Joe Ward (above) for a reported modest transfer fee of £8,000.

It was with regret that the Tannadice club agreed to part with the seasoned striker who joined them on a free transfer from Hibs in May, 1980. They felt, however, that the move would prove advantageous to the player.

Ward enjoyed a good spell with Dundee United in the League Cup last season when he scored seven goals in six games. Since then, he has found it difficult to command a regular first team place, and it was mainly for this reason that Joe was allowed to go.

Ward was the latest in a lengthy list of departures from Tannadice this year. The biggest transfers were Willie Pettigrew and Derek Addison to Hearts. Jim Kerr and Colin Campbell moved on to Airdrie, Ray Lorimer and Gerry Lesslie to Brechin City, Colin Craig to Forfar Athletic, and George Nicol to Dunfermline Athletic.

BILL McGARRY BRIGHTON'S UNDERCOVER AGENT

BRIGHTON manager Mike Bailey has appointed a spy to study the First Division club's future opposition.

Their undercover agent is none other than Bill McGarry, who has been out of work since losing his job as manager of Newcastle United.

McGarry's knowledge of football has become vital to Brighton's First Division campaign.

His reports are as stimulating as McGarry's knowledge of football became to Bailey when he was captain of Wolves and McGarry was boss at Molineux.

Their partnership worked wonders seven years ago when McGarry steered Wolves to the League Cup Final and Bailey encouraged his team-mates at Wembley to lift the trophy for the first time.

McGarry's undercover work for Brighton ran smoothly until he was asked by Bailey to attend the game between Tottenham and Manchester United at White Hart Lane.

McGarry just missed the terrifying fight between rival fans at Seven Sisters tube station, North

London which led to the death of a soccer fan.

He explains: "It was frightening. The fans were on the rampage, behaving like absolute animals.

"I was relieved eventually to take refuge on the tube train itself. But then it just stayed there in the station for what seemed ages. I was sweating like anything, and it wasn't just the heat.

"Fortunately, the Manchester United supporters jam-packed against me were very civilised. They made me feel quite safe after a while."



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A friendly face

A YEAR or two ago SHOOT's Editor, Peter Stewart, was present at England's hotel just outside London when he was approached by a friendly face offering assistance.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" the man inquired. Peter said he was hoping to interview former star winger Gordon Hill when he finished training.

The two men forged a friendship they kept until a few weeks ago. Their relationship was broken when Bill Taylor, England's coach, died tragically at the age of 42.

Bill, who was also coach at Oldham for the last three years, survived an operation for a brain tumour in 1979. He leaves a widow, Helen, and two daughters, aged 15 and six.

"He was one of football's nice guys and will be sadly missed," says Peter Stewart.



ALL the top clubs were chasing goalkeeper Colin Oakley when he starred in the England Schoolboys team three years ago.

But now 18-year-old Oakley is out of work and searching for a new team after being released by Sheffield United.

Manager Ian Porterfield reluctantly let him go because he already has three full-time keepers on his books.

But Porterfield agreed to give Oakley a good reference as the teenager from Peterlee in Co Durham looks for a new club.

"I could easily have given up after United let me go, but I'm determined to do well in football and I'm writing to clubs all over the country to ask for a chance," says Oakley.

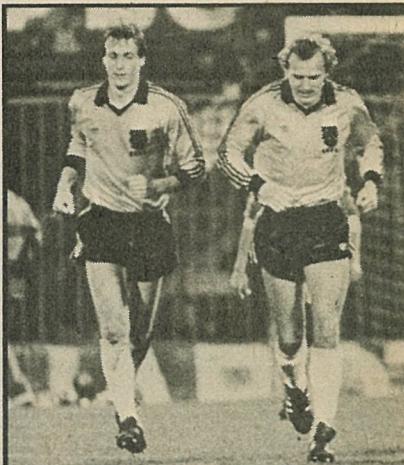
But there is better news of his twin brother Keith, a centre-half who has just signed professional forms for Crystal Palace.

Anti-hooligan plan backfires

COVENTRY CITY's decision to charge such high prices to visiting fans that hooligans would be discouraged from coming to games at Highfield Road has backfired on the First Division club.

Their pre-season decision to charge a minimum of £5 entry fee or £6 for a more important game has stopped hooliganism — and left the ground half empty.

MANCHESTER UNITED stars Kevin Moran and Lou Macari travelled over to Belfast to hand over a cheque for £1,000, on behalf of the Lisburn Reds' Supporters Club, to a Children's Hospital, in the Lisburn area.



'It's the end'
feared Muhren

SHOOT Annual is a winner

IS England captain Kevin Keegan, who launches the final chapter of his exciting career by leading England to the World Cup Finals in six months time, the saviour of English football?

• Will Brian Clough and Peter Taylor be on the move from Nottingham Forest?

• Who uttered the dreaded words to Liverpool star Ray Kennedy: "You'll never make a professional footballer, son."

• What are England goalkeeper Ray Clemence's training secrets?

• What is Scottish star Danny McGrain's dream team?

• Why does Andy Gray, the Wolves and Scotland striker, have so much to prove?

These questions are answered in the fabulous 125-page SHOOT Annual 1982, which is on sale now. Packed with exciting features, competitions, vivid colour pictures of the stars, it has to be the bargain of the year at £2.25.

'Trevor Francis is England's ace' says United boss

ENGLAND were fancied to win the European Championship in Italy in 1980 and came nowhere in the tournament.

Their chances of providing shocks in the 1982 World Cup are said to be nil.

The change of attitude could be to England's advantage, says Manchester

United boss Ron Atkinson.

"We will be seeded in Spain but few people will give us much of a chance of success," says Ron. "This could work in our favour. Our players could benefit from the media and fans expecting them to fail."

"I think we have a good chance of

doing well. But we need the right team."

Ron tips Glenn Hoddle, Alan Devonshire and Kenny Sansom to come into the England reckoning — and he would play Trevor Francis as striker in the five internationals planned before the World Cup.

DARLINGTON's experienced manager Billy Elliott wants to see a new substitute rule, similar to the one used in European ties.

Elliott made his plea for five subs — with two allowed to go on — minutes after Darlington's home tie against Carlisle in the F.A. Cup.

He was disappointed to see his side lose a 2-0 lead after defender Harry Wilson was forced to leave the field. He was replaced by an attacker, but Elliott believes he should have been able to send on another defender.

Forest star won't support England

ONE player who wouldn't have shed any tears had England NOT reached the World Cup Finals is Forest and Scotland winger John Robertson.

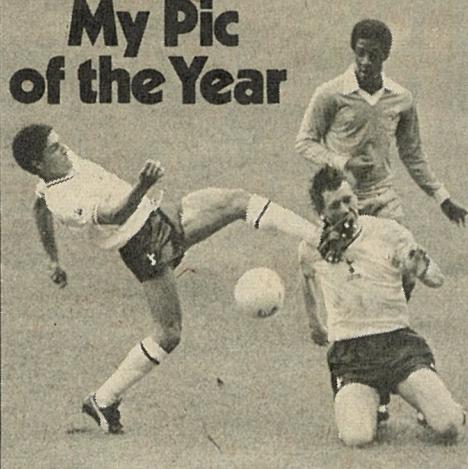
"I really couldn't care about them," says Robbo. "I'm only interested in Scotland. It didn't make any difference to me one way or the other when they eventually qualified."

On the other hand Scotland manager Jock Stein takes a different view.

"I wanted all the Home nations to be there," he says. "It takes the pressure off Scotland. Also, it's an all-round boost for the game."



My Pic of the Year



WHEN you are struggling to make a name for yourself as a Press photographer you get few of the comforts granted the better known men.

It's called "learning the trade."

But if your eye is sharp and you are blessed with above average ability, you compensate for the problems by grabbing chances when they present themselves.

Roger Lings, one of Fleet Street's most promising young freelance sports photographers, captured this marvellous action picture showing Graham Roberts receiving a boot in the face from his Tottenham team-mate Chris Hughton in the 1981 F.A. Cup Final against Manchester City.

Roger, who lives at Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey, took the pictures from the touchline after being denied one of the pole positions awarded to better known photographers.

His photograph was one of the most memorable to emerge from a highly entertaining Final and is worthy of a re-run.

Next May Roger Lings could find himself behind one of the goals at Wembley. He certainly deserves the opportunity.

Steve settles

FORMER Liverpool star Steve Heighway has quickly settled in the United States.

Steve, now with Minnesota Kickers, has sold his house in England and, along with his wife and two children, plans to make America their home.

"I don't need to be led around like a sheep. I'm enjoying it here and I plan to stay," he said.

IPSWICH Town's Arnold Muhren (being congratulated after scoring) is fearing the worst for his international career following the World Cup exit of Holland.

"Dutch manager Kees Rijvers will keep one or two experienced players and bring in some younger ones, but who he will keep is hard to say," said Muhren, who played in the 2-0 defeat in Paris which ended Dutch qualification hopes.

"But I wouldn't be surprised if I don't play again for Holland, and the same could be said of Frans Thijssen."

Thijssen missed the French defeat because of injury.

"I am bitterly disappointed that we have not qualified this time," added Muhren. "But we made life difficult for ourselves with our performances in the early matches."

Briefly

• Tommy Craig has turned down the chance to return to Scotland. The Swansea midfield player discussed a possible move to Partick Thistle but did not fancy a switch to part-time football.

• Further proof that football is feeling the pinch — apparently WBA have not had a single offer for transfer-listed David Mills, or John Deehan and Brendon Batson, who are also keen to leave The Hawthorns.

• Geoffrey Lomax, a 17-year-old defender with Manchester City, has plenty of sporting strings to his bow.

He has won honours in cricket, rugby and athletics as well as soccer.

An all-rounder with Droylsden, he topped the batting and bowling averages for 1980 in the Saddleworth League. He was the 200m champion in the Manchester area in 1978 and played rugby for Greater Manchester Boys.



coach Walter Smith hired a private aircraft and flew off from a small airfield at Scone, Perthshire, recently. Their destination was Antwerp where United's U.E.F.A. Cup opponents Wintersteg were playing the local F.C. Antwerp.

McLean doesn't normally go on spying missions but as the Belgians were playing on a Sunday he and Smith were able to fly over, see the game, and return the same day, without missing a training session.

McLean has also beaten seven other clubs for talented 15-year-old striker Colin Ainsley.

"There was a great deal of competition for this most promising youngster," said the Tannadice boss. "And I am more than pleased that he has decided to join us."

• Chester player-manager Alan Oakes, 39, completed 22 years in the game when his side met Exeter at Sealand Road last month.

Oakes, who made his debut for Manchester City against Chelsea in 1959, is the only player in the game with a career spanning four decades.

• Dundee United manager Jim McLean and

Johnny Morrissey is one of the few players to have played for both Liverpool and Everton since the War. Now, the former winger's son, John, has signed apprentice forms for Everton. Like his dad, he's a winger.

TOTTENHAM'S PARTY TIME

IF you are a Spurs fan and are still wondering what to ask mum or dad for Christmas, how about a copy of "The Tottenham Hotspur Party Album"?

Sung by the players, the LP contains 33 tracks, including a solo from Glenn Hoddle, the hit single 'Ossie's Dream', personal messages from Steve Perryman and manager Keith Burkinshaw and extracts from last season's exciting F.A. Cup Final victory.

Gemmill's burn-up

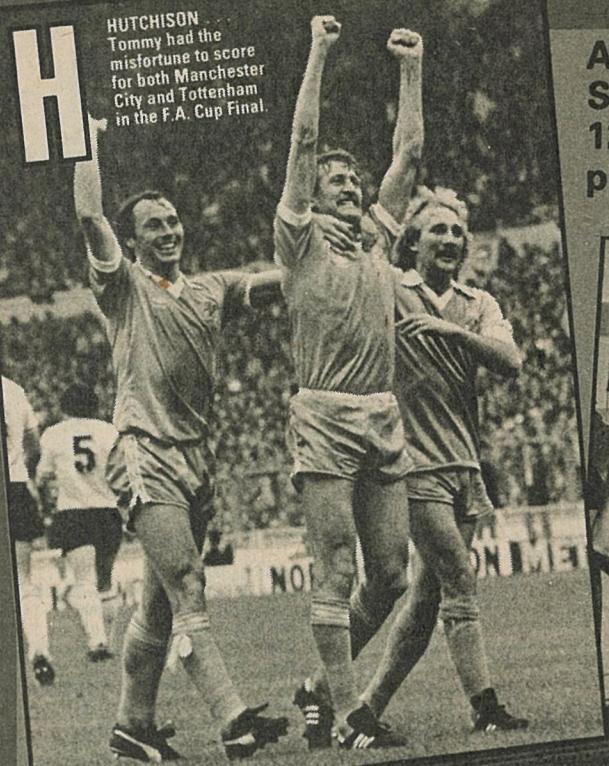
BIRMINGHAM CITY stars Archie Gemmill and Colin Todd escaped injury when the Scottish star's car caught fire on a journey to Derby after the game against Wolves.

The car was destroyed after a metal object severed the fuel pipe.

Todd's son also escaped injury.



H
HUTCHISON
Tommy had the
misfortune to score
for both Manchester
City and Tottenham
in the F.A. Cup Final.



As 1981 draws to a close,
SHOOT takes a look at the past
12 months and highlights the
players and clubs in the news.



C
CHAMPIONS... Celtic's
successful team line-up with
the Premier Division title.



R
ROBSON... Bryan,
Britain's most expensive
player signs on the
dotted line for
Manchester United at
Old Trafford.



H
HANSEN... Alan and Kenny
Dalglish with the League Cup
after their goals had beaten
West Ham.



I
IPSWICH... Bobby
Robson's men, after
threatening to win
everything, were left
with just the UEFA Cup
(John Wark scores
against AZ '67).





P

PETER WEIR (left) . . .
Scotland's most expensive
star when transferred from St
Mirren to Aberdeen.

P

PAUL MARINER . . . scores
the goal that sends England
to Spain.



T

TOTTENHAM . . .
won a spectacular
F.A. Cup Final replay
against Man City,
thanks to this
brilliant winner from
Ricky Villa.

S

SCOTLAND . . . reached the
World Cup Finals for the third
consecutive time.



Y

YOUNG . . . Willie's fortunes
dipped towards the end
of 1981. Here's hoping
the talented centre-half
finds success in 1982.



A

ALAN KENNEDY . . . scores
his brilliant winner for
Liverpool against Real
Madrid in the European Cup
Final.

M

MARTIN O'NEILL . . . helped
Northern Ireland to the 1982
World Cup Finals in Spain.

S

SUPPORTERS . . . here's hoping that
Jack Charlton and
everyone connected
with football can
bring the Smiles
back to a game.





PHIL THOMPSON
My soccer world

'NINE POINTS? I'll drink to that'

EVERY Christmas I become a "no man". In order to stay in fighting trim at this first critical stage in the Championship race, I have to force myself to say "no" to all the rich food and drink. I'm the odd man out amongst my family and friends for the festivities. Early nights and a strict diet are my lot.

It's a penalty I'm pleased to pay as a professional footballer, and one dedicated to helping to put Liverpool back in contention for the title after our worst start for years.

Missing out on the parties and celebrations is no hardship. I want my good times on the pitch, coming out of each of our three League games over the period with the three points for a win.

It's a hard programme, starting on Saturday, December 19th, against Spurs away at White Hart Lane, then at home the following Saturday to Manchester City, and ending the year away to Stoke City.

Nine points would be a marvelous Christmas bonus and place us up among the League leaders where we belong.

High Standard

Despite what some people may think, the League Championship remains our top priority. The test of a great club is the ability to play consistently to a high standard, to outperform our rivals over 42 League games in all sorts of conditions.

European football is increasingly important to Liverpool, due to the hard times brought about by recession, and naturally we prefer to compete for the most prized trophy, the European Cup. And as Champions, not holders!

But we've made the going harder for ourselves this season, drawing too many games, a liability now that three points are awarded for a win.

The home defeat by Southampton at the end of November was a big setback when we'd hoped for a lift-off from mid-table. Saints surprised us by concentrating on defence instead of attack as we'd expected. A combination of bad finishing and tremendous shot-saving by Ivan Katalinic — unfortunately inspired by our Koppites, who must all be members of some goalkeepers' appreciation society — denied us a goal.

Their winner, coolly taken by

young Steve Moran, looked offside to me at the time. A study of the TV video recording failed to confirm my view, as our right-back Phil Neal was out of frame at the crucial moment.

It was a great win for Saints, and it's now becoming clear that the team with the most victories away from home will take the title.

Another team in the running are Spurs, who have emerged as one of the major contenders, and our visit to White Hart Lane on Saturday could be a great game.

An added incentive for us is the prospect of facing our former team-mate, Ray Clemence, and he's sure to be out to keep a clean sheet.

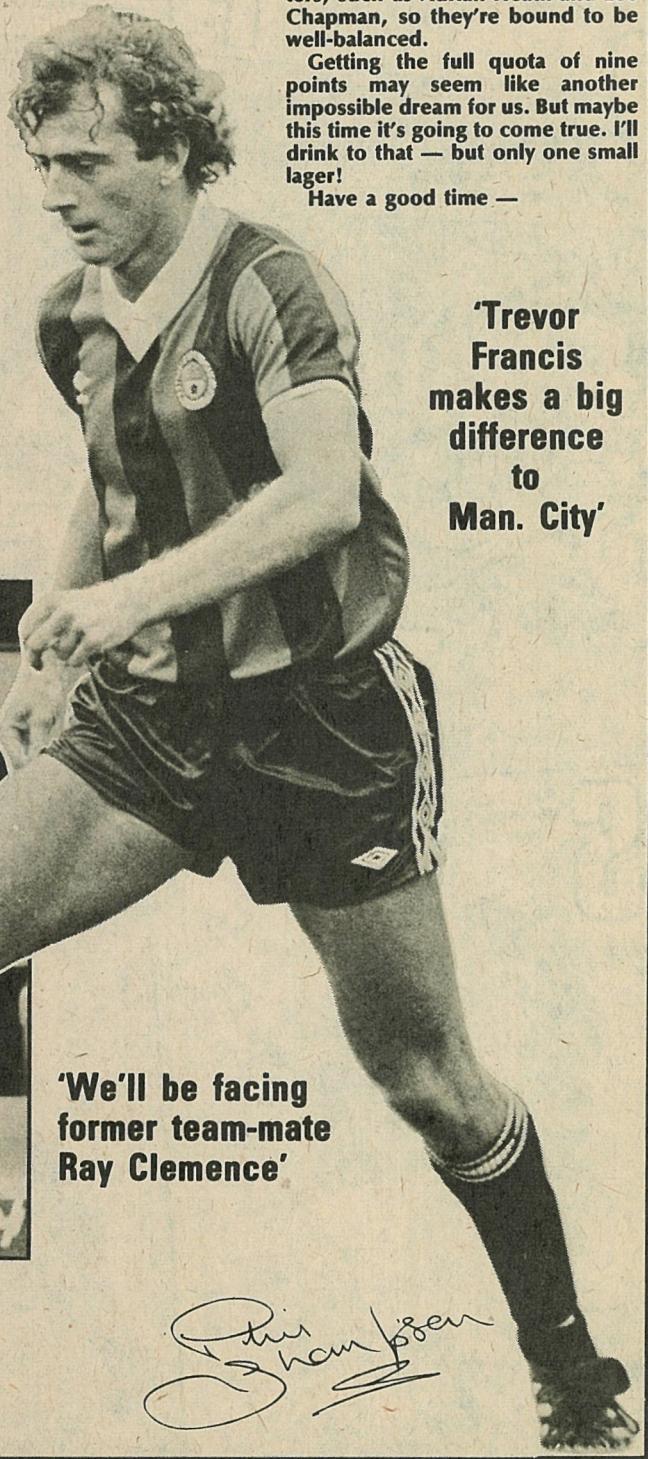
I anticipate a battle of wits between the midfielders, who'll each be trying to cut the opposition's supply-line of balls to the strikers.

In Glenn Hoddle and Osvaldo Ardiles Spurs have two of the finest ball-players in the country. Glenn is so brilliant he can control the most awkward ball and shoot in the same movement. Ardiles is a master of the one-two pass and also at tantalising toe-poking the ball away

just when a defender is convinced he's won it.

The following Tuesday we travel to Ibrox Park in Glasgow for a friendly with Rangers to celebrate the opening of their North Stand.

Christmas Day falls on a Friday, which means that while most of you



**'We'll be facing
former team-mate
Ray Clemence'**

readers are celebrating with your family and friends, we'll be having a quiet time at an hotel preparing for our home game against Manchester City.

John Bond's team seem to be suffering from the same switchback form that's affected us, probably because they've had Trevor Francis out injured. I know one man doesn't make a team, but he can certainly make a big difference.

I'm not sure if Trevor will be playing in this one but, even so, City will give us a hard fight and the fans a game that'll raise plenty of Christmas cheers.

Because Stoke are down-table, it doesn't mean we'll be underestimating them on the Monday. We've never had an easy time at The Potteries.

Stoke possess a fine blend of old hands and very promising youngsters, such as Adrian Heath and Lee Chapman, so they're bound to be well-balanced.

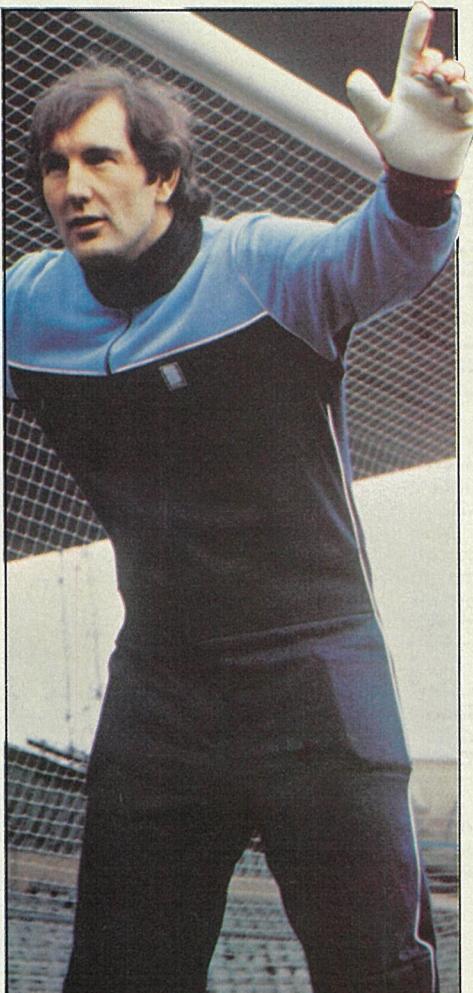
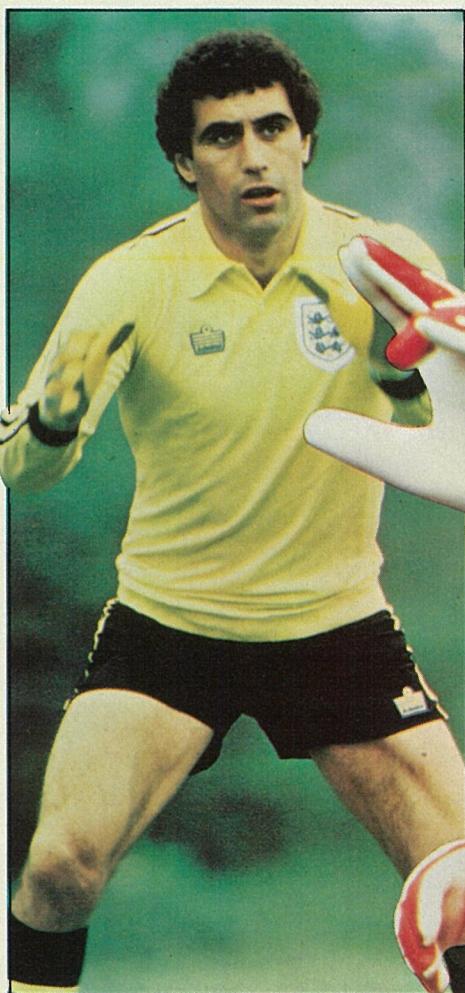
Getting the full quota of nine points may seem like another impossible dream for us. But maybe this time it's going to come true. I'll drink to that — but only one small lager!

Have a good time —

**'Trevor
Francis
makes a big
difference
to
Man. City'**

Phil Thompson

England's Top 3



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Gary Gillespie soars above Kevin Keegan for Coventry against Southampton at Highfield Road. The Sky Blues won 4-2.



**PAUL
MARINER**
Ipswich

JOHN Toshack even got the timing right when he was appointed manager of Swansea City — St. David's Day, 1978. From March 1st, 1978, to October 17th, 1981, he inspired the Welsh club from the Fourth Division to the top of the First.

It was the most brilliant, dramatic climb in Football League history: a million miles away from Swansea's blackest moment. On April 26th, 1975, they lost by the only goal of the game at Rochdale and that condemned them to applying for re-election for the first time in their history.

secure the votes that would save the club.

Griffiths feared that re-election might be a tough battle to win. Although it was the first — and only — time in their history that they had faced such an ordeal, Griffiths was aware that Swansea's remoteness might

SHOOT'S TRIBUTE TO SUPER SWANSEA, THE TEAM OF THE MOMENT. BUT IT WASN'T LONG AGO WHEN . . .



At that point, they looked doomed. Finances were at breaking point and day one of the Toshack era was almost three years distant. Two men shouldered the burden: chairman Malcolm Struel and manager Harry Griffiths.

When Harry Gregg had left the club three months earlier, Griffiths had gone in to see the man who is still chairman today and said: "My turn now. Anyway, I'm the only one you can afford!" So Griffiths, ex-player, ex-physiotherapist, ex-coach, was given an almost hopeless task.

It was too late to turn the tide that season. The moment the blow fell at Rochdale, Griffiths and club secretary Gordon Daniels talked to everyone they knew in football to

COUNCIL SAVED SWANSEA FROM EXTINCTION!

count against them. London, Midlands and especially Northern clubs found the trip to Swansea long and expensive: every vote had to be canvassed.

Griffiths and Daniels, still secretary today just as Struel is chairman, won their vote . . . and Swansea were on their way back.

Struel, won his fight as well — against bankruptcy. At one point they were two weeks away from financial closure. Struel even advised Griffiths: Start looking for a new job.

The local council stepped in and saved them with a £200,000 purchase of the ground. That was the turning point: now the young players were breaking through:

Alan Curtis, Robbie James and Jeremy Charles, for instance.

Swansea finished 11th that season and there was better to come as Griffiths drove himself at a furious pace.

Swansea just missed out on promotion, but next time around, in 1977-78, the move that clinched promotion came when Toshack arrived on St. David's Day.

Griffiths, involved in the change of management and knowing that the club now needed a young, bold, 'big name' at the helm

willingly slotted in as his assistant. Finally it came to the final week of the season and Swansea needed to beat Scunthorpe on the Tuesday and Halifax on the Saturday to clinch promotion.

On the morning of the Scunthorpe game came a shattering, cruel blow: Griffiths collapsed and died in the treatment room. "We had a team meeting to decide whether to go ahead with the game," said longest serving player Wyndham Evans. "For Harry's sake, we wanted to play it. And win it!"

That is exactly what they did. Scunthorpe were swept aside 3-1; then Halifax were beaten 2-0.

Harry Griffiths failed by four days to see the moment that he had worked for.



The Liverpool connection

THE Swansea four of Evans, James, Curtis and Charles who have shared in the climb from Fourth Division to First are of one mind about the decisive step in John Toshack's spectacular feat: signing Ian Callaghan and Tommy Smith.

"They taught us how to play," says Charles. "We had fought our way out of the Fourth Division but then we needed something more. The manager knew exactly who would provide it — Cally and Tommy."

For that one season in the Third, Smith (left) took over the captaincy and Callaghan directed operations from midfield.

But it went even further than just another promotion: Smith, Callaghan and Toshack gave Swansea what they now possess above everything: the ultimate professionalism of Liverpool.

The incredible rise to the top

The desperate season — Fourth Division 1974-75:												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
21 Darlington	46	11	4	8	38	27	2	6	15	16	40	36
22 Swansea	46	9	4	10	25	31	6	2	15	21	42	36
23 Workington	46	7	5	11	23	29	3	6	14	13	37	31
24 Scunthorpe	46	7	8	8	27	29	0	7	16	14	49	24

The comeback years — Fourth Division 1975-76 and 1976-77:												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
11 Swansea	46	14	8	1	51	21	2	7	14	15	36	47
5 Swansea	46	18	3	2	60	30	7	5	11	32	38	58

The breakthrough years — Fourth Division 1977-78 . . .												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
3 Swansea	46	16	5	2	54	17	7	5	11	33	30	56

. . . and the Third Division 1978-79												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
3 Swansea	46	16	6	1	57	32	8	6	9	26	29	60

The consolidation season — Second Division 1979-80												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
12 Swansea	42	13	1	7	31	20	4	8	9	17	33	43

The history-making promotion — Second Division 1980-81												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
3 Swansea	42	12	5	4	39	19	6	9	6	25	25	50

The crowning moment — First Division, October 17th, 1981												
Pos	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
1 Swansea	10	5	0	0	14	4	2	1	2	7	9	22
2 Tottenham	10	3	0	2	9	7	4	0	1	8	3	20
3 Ipswich	10	4	1	0	9	4	2	1	2	11	9	20

Swansea landmarks

January 25th, 1975. Harry Griffiths becomes manager of Swansea City.

April 26th, 1975. Swans lose 0-1 at Rochdale and finish 22nd in the Fourth Division to ensure re-election vote.

June 6th, 1975. Win that vote along with Darlington, Workington and Scunthorpe.

April 28th, 1976. Finish 11th in Fourth Division.

May 14th, 1977. Finish fifth in Fourth Division.

March 1st, 1978. John Toshack takes over as manager with Harry Griffiths as his assistant.

April 25th, 1978. Griffiths dies at the Vetch Field. Team carry on to beat Scunthorpe 3-1.

April 29th, 1978. Swansea beat Halifax 2-0 to finish third and gain

Harry Griffiths,
the former
Swansea boss
who died at the
start of the
glory years.



promotion.

May 11th, 1979. Toshack scores winning goal in 2-1 win against Chesterfield in final game of the season. Swans thus finish third in Third Division for second successive promotion.

May 3rd, 1980. Finish 12th in Second Division.

May 2nd, 1981. Win 3-1 at Preston in final game of the season to reach First Division for first time.

Oct. 17th, 1981. Win 2-1 at Stoke City to go top of First Division.

THREE players link the Swansea City of re-election and near bankruptcy and the Swansea City that stood astride the First Division.

They are club captain Wyndham Evans — plus Alan Curtis and Robbie James, the two players on the pitch both at Rochdale on re-election humiliation day (April 26th, 1975) and at Stoke City on First Division leadership day (October 17th, 1981).

"Of course, it was a great moment for the club. But I wonder whether any of the famous players now in the Vetch Field dressing room could begin to imagine what that moment was like for the three of us?" says Curtis.

"To have talked about the leadership of world football's finest League back in the Fourth Division days, when we didn't even know if we would be paid at the end of the week, would have made

The three stars who have seen it all

motorway service area and had fish and chips. No one complained, of course, because you just thanked your lucky stars that you were still in football.

"On our opening game this season against Leeds, I went into the players' lounge — and that was a thousand miles away from the old days as well — to find snacks like pate and cheese biscuits topped with caviar. If Harry Griffiths had been alive to see it, he would have enjoyed that moment.

"The spirit was fantastic in those days. If we hadn't all pulled together, we would have gone bust. Everyone was involved to the hilt, even Harry's wife Gwen — who we all love to see at the club these days.

Fixture

"She took over the job of washing the first team kit. We had just one set so Gwen would collect it immediately after the game, wash and iron and have it back in the dressing room for the following fixture."

James (below) confirms: "It was all hands to the pumps. I've never wanted anything but to play for The Swans — but sometimes it wasn't easy. Even before those visits to Arsenal and Villa when I was a first team player, Chelsea had been chasing me."

"I spent several weeks there but I knew in my heart of hearts that it wasn't for me. I came home, signed for The Swans and spent my first year or so cleaning out the boot room or pushing the mower across the pitch because we couldn't afford a groundsman."

"But when I look around now, I count myself as one of the luckiest men in football."



Toshack brought his brilliant side to Anfield (below) and was handed a Kop 'special' following a 2-2 draw. "Who would have thought that it would have turned out like this? A complete fairytale come true!" ponders Callaghan.

us laughing stocks. The fantastic moment that arrived with our win at Stoke was very special to us because of what we've been through. We had seen it all!"

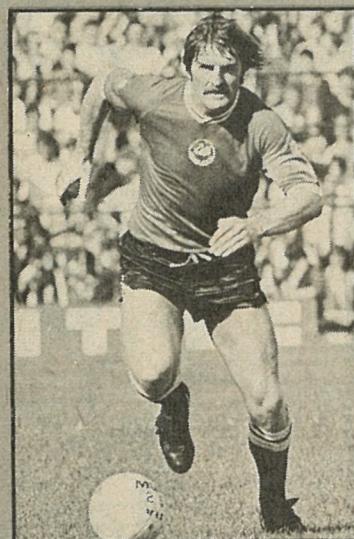
Robbie James, who rejected

chances to join both Arsenal and Aston Villa when The Swans were fighting day by day to survive, agrees: "I look around now and I can't believe what I see."

"When we stay at the finest of hotels, I tell players like Bob Latchford and John Mahoney how 'Curt' and I once found our luggage in the street. We had travelled hours on a coach to Workington and the commercial hotel was too small for all of us. Alan and I moved along to a bed and breakfast place and, on the morning of the game, we went back to the headquarters for a team talk."

"Later, we returned to our place to pick up our cases and found them on the street. It had gone 12 and every room had to be emptied then unless it had been paid for in advance!"

"And how about those meals!" recalls Evans. "You called in at a



Every day is Christmas Day

THIS Friday at Arsenal, as on every Friday morning in the last training spell of the week, Saturday's first team will be having a six-a-side game, the Oldies against the Young Ones.

In football terms an Oldie begins at 25, which is normally how the Arsenal game is divided.

It is always a hard game but over the season, John Hollins says, the Oldies usually win.

Before each game the jokes are always the same. Leave your walking stick over there, John. Not got the wheelchair today, then Holly? So are the jokes afterwards. Off for your pension now? If you're going to buy any records, don't get any long players ...

Hollins is 35, which in First Division terms makes him a geriatric. He became a First Division club player 20 years ago, a record which no other current player can better.

Yet he is as valuable a team player as he has ever been, with enormous energy and enthusiasm and a fair amount of skill. Ask any professional manager. They would have him in their team.

He is supposedly midfield but in recent weeks he has seemed to be everywhere, taking all the free-kicks and corners and running up the wing and crossing like a teenager. How does he do it?

Have a seat John. You must be exhausted. And don't watch that horror film on the tele tonight, John. Your heart won't stand it ...

He joined Chelsea at 15 and played with them for 14 years, until he was almost 29, when Eddie McCreadie arrived and said he wanted to build a young team.

It could have been the end of his career, one which had already been long and successful, but Dave Sexton, who had gone to Queens Park Rangers, decided to buy him for £80,000.

He had four years at Rangers. Then the bold Tommy Docherty arrived and he, too, said it was out with the oldies and in with the

new blood.

Hollins was put on offer. He expected to drop into the lower Divisions, perhaps do a bit of coaching, and had already started signing documents when he rang the Rangers office one day and was told that Arsenal wanted him.

Terry Neill had been to Argentina, failing to sign anyone, and was looking for experienced players to strengthen his pool as they had a hard season ahead in Europe.

"I knew he would be valuable," Mr. Neill said, "but if I had to put my hand on my heart I have to say I am surprised he has played so well for so long. Every day is Christmas Day as far as John is concerned."

Physical

"I only wish that everyone, not just footballers, put as much into life, and got as much out of it, as John does."

Hollins looks young. Most footballers visually age terribly quickly, which is not surprising when you see the physical pummelling they get each day of the week. At 23 their faces are lined, their brows furrowed, little old men before their time.

Hollins has naturally a little-boy look and little-boy hair and his normal expression is a smile.

"They would think something was seriously wrong with me if I didn't arrive at the club giggling."

He has a one-and-a-half hour drive from Bromley in Kent everyday, so it cannot be the travelling which makes him smile. It must be inside.

You would not mind your

Smiling as usual — Hollins with former Chelsea boss Dave Sexton after the 1971 Cup-Winners' Cup success.



for John (Mr Nice Guy) Hollins

daughter marrying Hollins. He appears so nice. Everyone who knows him says he is nice.

"John went up to Reading the other afternoon to visit a fan in hospital," Mr. Neill said: "It was a letter which arrived at the club. We didn't know the people. John just went off without any fuss or making a thing of it."

"Footballers are a maligned lot these days, accused of being greedy and selfish, but there are still people in the game like John who are simply good human beings."

However, helping old ladies across the road does not keep you in the first team. He did not make it as a regular when he arrived three years ago at Arsenal, alternating with David Price and managing only half the games that first season. Last season he missed only four games.

Now he appears established in the team. "Not that I take anything for granted. I still rush to the team sheet every time it goes up."

He puts it all down firstly to an inner drive. "From the very beginning I've wanted to make it happen. I must have seen

thousands of schoolboys come through clubs in my 20 years, many with a great deal of skill but no drive.

"They expect it to happen to them. You've got to do it yourself. Make yourself be noticed.

"Even if it's a youth game away to Scunthorpe you've got to give 100 per cent. Someone will be in the crowd writing down your name.

"There are young lads here today at Arsenal who think 'Oh, I don't feel like it today, I won't



knock myself out'. I find this incredible. Perhaps it's the society we live in. People get things too easy.

"Can you think of a nicer life than being a footballer — a nicer way of getting on TV, having your name in the paper every week, making good money and enjoying yourself? I can't. Yet so many who do have the chances cut corners and cheat."

Physical fitness has been equally important. He has escaped serious injuries but thinks that this has been helped by being fit. You can ride tackles better and ordinary injuries can be recovered from quickly if you are in top condition.

"I never had a stitch on my body till I came to Arsenal." Now he has one over his eye and another on a knee.

"I play as hard as I've ever done. I come off the pitch feeling just as I did when I was 20 — shattered.

"Alf Ramsey once told me, when I was playing for the Under-23 team, that I would burn myself out by 27 unless I calmed down. Possibly I have, without realising it. Perhaps I don't do as much daft running as I used to.

"I don't think I'm any slower than I was. I came ninth out of 40 in the Arsenal cross-country, which I thought was pretty good."

In recent years he has also become diet conscious. It is surprising how many footballers are ignorant about such things.

For many years John always had a steak and rice pudding every Saturday lunchtime before the match. In his youth at Chelsea he had been told that that was what real footballers ate. Now on match days he has cornflakes and scrambled eggs at 11.30.

'Better'

"During the week I used to have lunch at the club every day, then come home and have some tea and cakes. Now I've given up lunches and I don't miss it at all — and I also feel much better."

He has no outside business interests, which he thinks has been another helpful factor. "I did set up a clothes shop with the wife a few years ago but we were clobbered by the three-day week.

"I was upset at the time but out of bad has come good. I have nothing else to worry about.

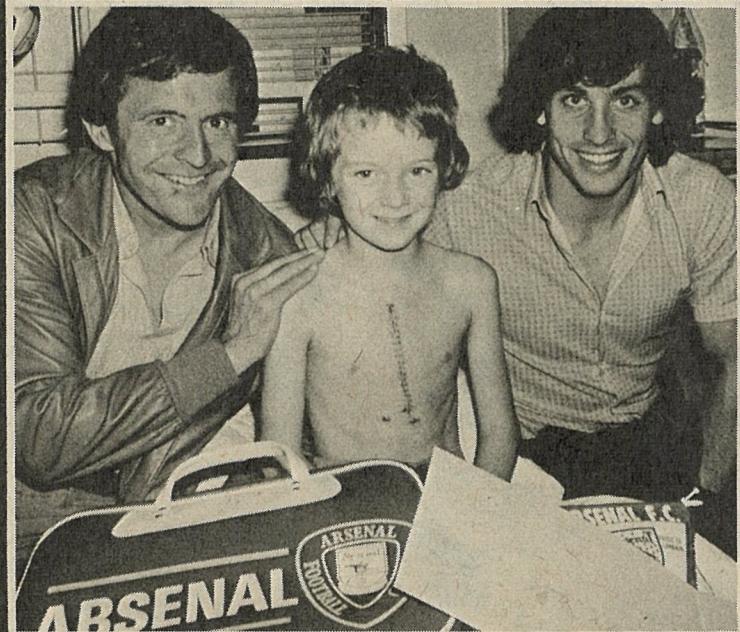
"I can be a manager any time I like. But I can't be a footballer in the First Division ever again. So I'll do that as long as I can. It's in my own hands. When you become a manager it's in the hands of 11 other people.

"People tell me I have one weakness which will hinder me as a manager. I'm too nice. I couldn't frighten people or give them a roasting. Perhaps I will when I have to but I hope I can do it my way.

"If I'm too nice I haven't done badly in the last 20 years, have I? Perhaps I'll succeed as a nice manager. If there can ever be such a thing . . ."

HUNTER DAVIES
© The Times, 1981

Training hard (above) and helping out at a local hospital (right), Hollins' attitude to life hasn't changed over the years.



WILKINS: We're playing for West Bromwich United these days! No matter how we try to treat the game at The Hawthorns as 'just another match' it simply isn't possible. Feelings will be running high . . .

ROBSON: Apparently even after I left Albion the fans there were chanting nasty things about me. And at half-time they couldn't wait to hear United's score, just in case we were behind.

WILKINS: The only sure thing about the WBA/United game is that the former Albion brigade will be given a bad time by the fans.

ROBSON: Yes, I'm expecting some stick, although I understand most of the bad feeling has been directed towards Ron Atkinson rather than Remi Moses or myself.

WILKINS: Before we played at Arsenal this season Frank Stapleton asked me what sort of reception I thought he'd have. I told him it would be uncomfortable and I was right.

ROBSON: Have you played at Chelsea since you signed for United?

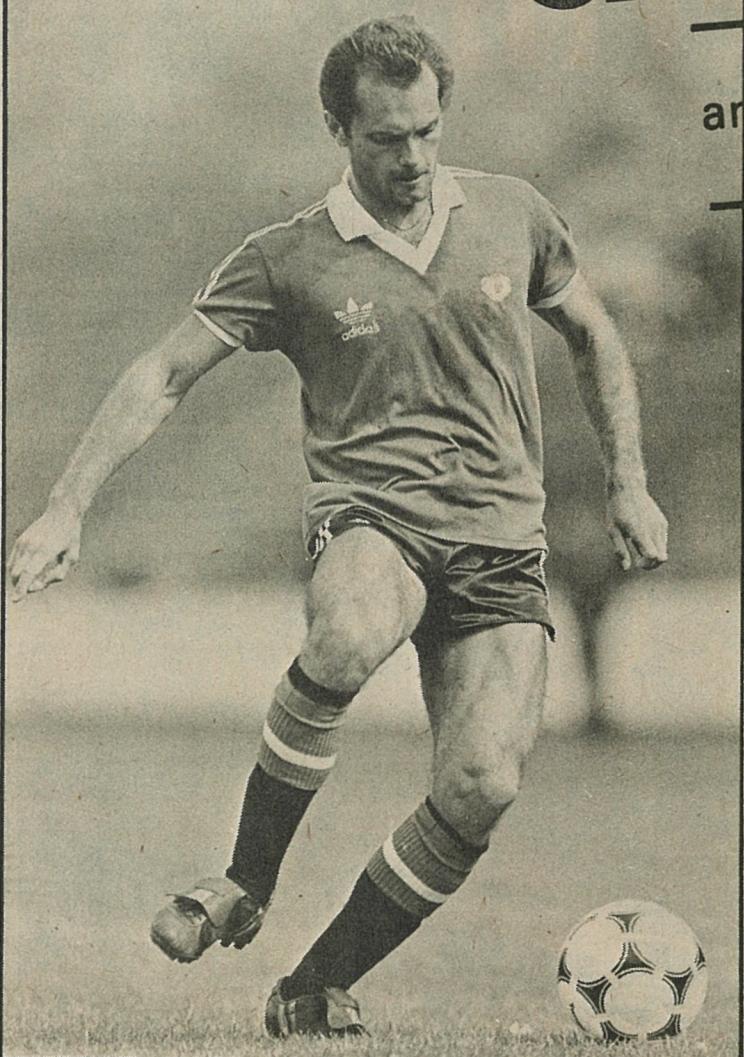
WILKINS: Once, in a testimonial game for Peter Bonetti. It upset me a little that the Stamford Bridge supporters booed me, although I wasn't surprised. It was the same for Alan

WEST BROM.V. MAN. UTD...



A HOT RECEPTION FOR UNITED'S GANG OF FOUR!

SHOOT columnists Ray Wilkins and Bryan Robson discuss the game soccer has been waiting for



bother, but football isn't like that. I suppose if you ask to leave the fans think you're deserting their club. When I was a Newcastle supporter as a kid I used to boo the players who returned to St James' Park if they'd put in for a transfer. Those who were just sold by the club were treated better, though.

WILKINS: I agree. Andy Ritchie was always a big favourite at Old Trafford. The fans loved him. When he comes back to United with Brighton he gets a bigger cheer than us! I'll never forget when he scored for Brighton against us, the Stretford End didn't know how to react. They were pleased for Andy, but sorry for United!

ROBSON: I can appreciate the Albion supporters feeling bitter towards United. Having said that, Ron Atkinson's contract was almost at its end, while Remi Moses' had actually expired. And I told Albion that I was unhappy last season.

WILKINS: But when the manager, coach (Mick Brown) and two star players join another club feelings are bound to run high.

ROBSON: Whatever happens I'm sure I'll enjoy going back to The Hawthorns to see all the people I worked with. I still keep in touch

with a few of the lads . . . I speak to Brendon Batson, Cyrille Regis, Tony Godden and Derek Statham on the phone regularly. They tell me this Dutch lad Martin Jol has settled in ever so well.

WILKINS: After a poor start Albion have recovered — it's never an easy game for us there.

ROBSON: I said when I left that Albion had too many good players to struggle for long. I think the arrival of Gerry Summers as coach has had a big influence. He's got them more organised and working for each other.

WILKINS: Because of the busy Christmas schedule you won't have had much time to think about the game, but it'll be a big occasion with a lot of attention focused on yourself. Personally, I'm never really aware of a hostile atmosphere when the game's started.

ROBSON: Away teams tend to be booed anyway! Despite what some people may think, I had eight happy years with Albion and I want to see them do well. Whatever the result I'll have a drink with the boys afterwards.

WILKINS: After Coventry had beaten us on the opening day of the season Dave Sexton said: "Winning is always nice, but today

DECEMBER 28TH.



Remi, Frank Stapleton and John Gidman settled in without virtually any problems. It's also made the other players be on their toes even more. No one's certain of a first

team place these days.

ROBSON: It helped me knowing the manager and coach, as well as many of the players. I just wish we could find a house that suits us. Living in an hotel is getting on my nerves. Ron told me, when he signed me, that he wanted me to do exactly the same as what I'd been doing for him at Albion, so not changing my style has also helped.

WILKINS: I'd say the Championship is between ourselves, Spurs, West Ham and Ipswich. Villa are back in form but may have too much ground to make up. It's the same with Liverpool, although they're always likely to win seven on the trot and be back in contention. Ipswich are the big threat — they're up there but they haven't played well yet.

ROBSON: I'd go along with you. I can't see Forest winning the title, although they'll probably finish in the top six.

WILKINS: They're there nagging away all the time ...

ROBSON: As well as Swansea have done, I think they'll be delighted to win a UEFA Cup place.

WILKINS: They've proved a lot of people wrong, including me. If a team's going to blow up it usually does so before now.

ROBSON: I like the look at Spurs. They're the best team I've played against. We've played well against just about everyone except them. Although I must admit their home form leaves a lot to be desired. Tottenham's recent defeat by Coventry City at White Hart Lane was their fifth reversal this season at home.

WILKINS: Ipswich impressed me when they won 2-1 at Old Trafford before you came here, but they've still not found last season's form. In both League Cup-ties and in the First Division game at White Hart Lane Spurs stopped us playing and went on from there. They're a real threat.

ROBSON: What are your Christmas plans?

WILKINS: What I'd like most from Father Christmas is a good night's sleep. Our son Ross takes after his dad as far as eating's concerned and he doesn't mind if it's three in the afternoon or three in the morning!

ROBSON: I'll settle for nine points against Stoke, Everton and West Brom!

was even nicer!" I think everyone knew what he meant.

ROBSON: It'll be the same for me if we win at The Hawthorns! Mind you, although it's more than just another game, there are still only three points at stake and we mustn't lose sight of that.

WILKINS: We've been doing quite well away from home. Basically we go out to attack wherever we play, although we've been finding more space on opponents' grounds.

ROBSON: A lot was made about you and I not being able to play together. I never went along with that. My view is that any two good players can play together. It's just a question of finding the right blend and formation.

WILKINS: We should both be scoring a few more goals, though.

ROBSON: This has disappointed me. The manager expects ten goals a season from me and I scored only my second goal for United against Southampton recently. I could do with a couple of hat-tricks over Christmas to bring me back on schedule!

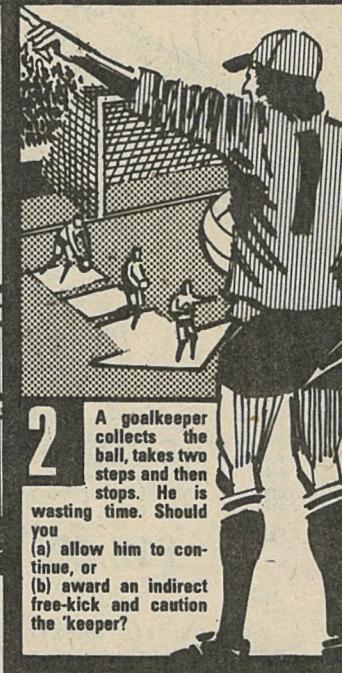
WILKINS: I think the new players at United were helped by the friendly atmosphere at the club, but I'm still surprised that you,

YOU ARE THE REF

compiled by Keith Hackett



A player taking a corner kick removes the flag in order to get a better run up. Is this allowed?



2 A goalkeeper collects the ball, takes two steps and then stops. He is wasting time. Should you
(a) allow him to continue, or
(b) award an indirect free-kick and caution the 'keeper?



3 A goalkeeper is about to clear the ball when an opponent raises a foot in front of him. Should you award an indirect free-kick against the forward?

MATCH POINT

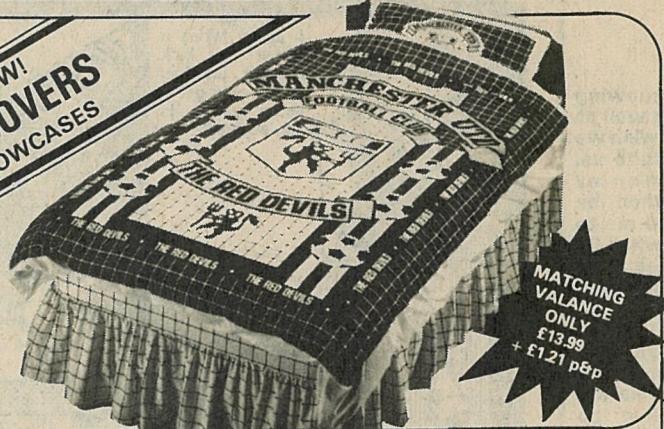
As usual, it's a busy Christmas for me this year. On Sunday the 20th I'll be at Nottingham Forest for the game against Ipswich. Traditionally the last Saturday before Christmas draws poor crowds because people are out buying their presents, so I hope Forest's switch to the Sunday pays off. On the 26th I'm in charge of the Sunderland v Stoke game. There could be a problem here, because if the weather turns nasty I'll have to drive the 110 miles to Sunderland from my Sheffield home on Christmas Day and stay overnight. If the weather's okay I'll stay at home and have a few relatives round, but like all the players I'll have to keep an eye on what I have to eat and drink. I hope you'll all be out and about supporting the holiday games, and I'd like to wish you all a Happy Christmas. See you in the New Year.

ANSWERS

1. No. It is surprising how often this happens. Players must learn they should also be cautious, regardless of whether it is to one side. 2. Award an indirect free-kick and caution the keeper. (b). 3. Yes. The forward is likely to push it to one side. 2. Award an indirect free-kick and caution the keeper. Because the referee's job is to ensure that the game is played fairly and safely, it is important that players respect the rules and the referee's decisions. If a player is found to be deliberately pushing the ball to one side, it is a foul and the referee will award an indirect free-kick to the opposing team. The referee will also caution the player for the foul. If a player is found to be deliberately pushing the ball to one side, it is a foul and the referee will award an indirect free-kick to the opposing team. The referee will also caution the player for the foul.

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SHOOT

SOCCER CALENDAR



Kevin Keegan and England
will be flying the flag in
Spain.



Set for sunny Spain —
Northern Ireland
skipper Martin O'Neill
and Scotland's Graeme
Souness.

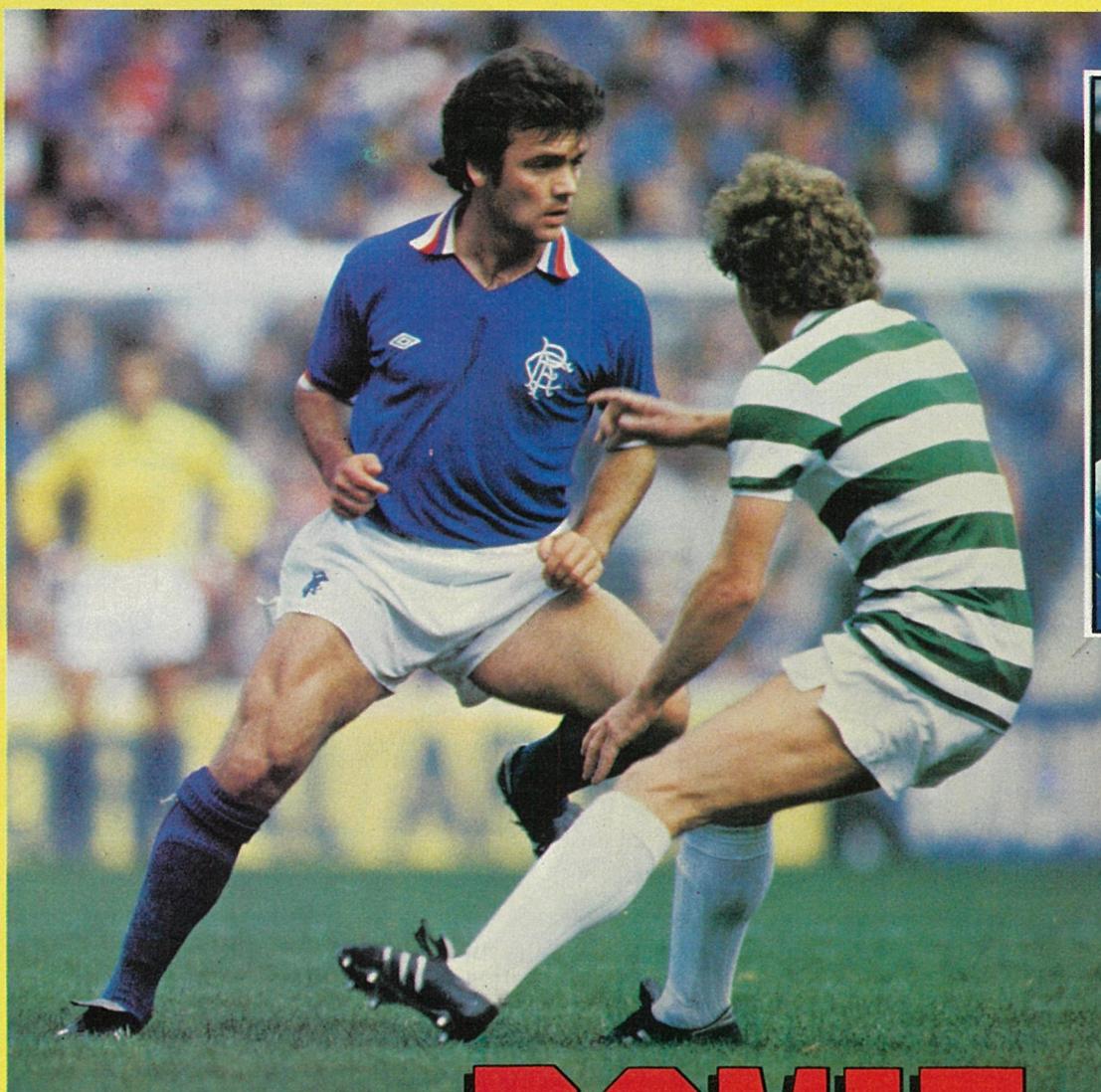
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June 13th — July 11th.

1982

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SHOOT!

Tommy McLean



Super Focus

DAVIE COOPER RANGERS

Barry Manilow, Crystal Gayle
FAVOURITE ACTOR . . .
ACTRESS: Peter Sellers and Victoria Principal
FAVOURITE HOLIDAY RESORT: Majorca
BEST FILM SEEN RECENTLY: 10
FAVOURITE TV SHOW: Any sports programme
FAVOURITE ACTIVITY ON DAY OFF: Playing squash
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER: My father, my brother John, Bill Munro at Clydebank, Jock Wallace and John Greig
SUPERSTITIONS: None
INTERNATIONAL HONOURS: Two full Scottish caps and several Under-21
PERSONAL AMBITION: To be happy and to win as many trophies as I can with Rangers
IF NOT A PLAYER, WHAT JOB WOULD YOU DO? I suppose I'd still be a printer
CAREER AFTER PLAYING: No idea
WHICH PERSON IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? Bjorn Borg

Davie Cooper

FULL NAME: David Cooper

BIRTHPLACE: Hamilton

BIRTHDATE: February 25, 1956

HEIGHT: 5ft 10ins

WEIGHT: 12st 1lb

MARRIED: To Christine

CHILDREN: None

CAR: Ford Escort

PREVIOUS CLUB: Clydebank

JOB OR TRADE BEFORE TURNING PRO: Printer

NICKNAME: 'Coop'

FAVOURITE NEWSPAPER:

Rangers News

FAVOURITE PLAYER: Tommy McLean

A PLAYER FOR THE FUTURE: Gordon Dalziel (young Rangers striker)

FAVOURITE OTHER TEAM:

Rangers reserves

FOOTBALL HERO OF CHILDHOOD: None

FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTS:

Squash, tennis

OTHER SPORTS PERSON YOU MOST ADMIRE: Bjorn Borg

YOUR BEST EVER ALL TIME XI:

Zoff (Italy); Jardine (Scotland), Pezzy (Austria), J. Charlton (England), Tarantini (Argentina); Alberto (Brazil), Tardelli (Italy), R. Charlton (England); Bettega (Italy), Kempes (Argentina), Best (N. Ireland).

MOST MEMORABLE MATCH:

When Rangers beat PSV Eindhoven away two years ago

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT:

Any time Rangers are beaten

FRIENDLIEST AWAY FANS:

None

BEST STADIUM PLAYED IN:

Valencia

FAVOURITE FOOD AND DRINK: Fillet steak and lager

MISCELLANEOUS LIKES . . .

DISLIKES: Squash, tennis, horse racing and dining out . . . Bad referees

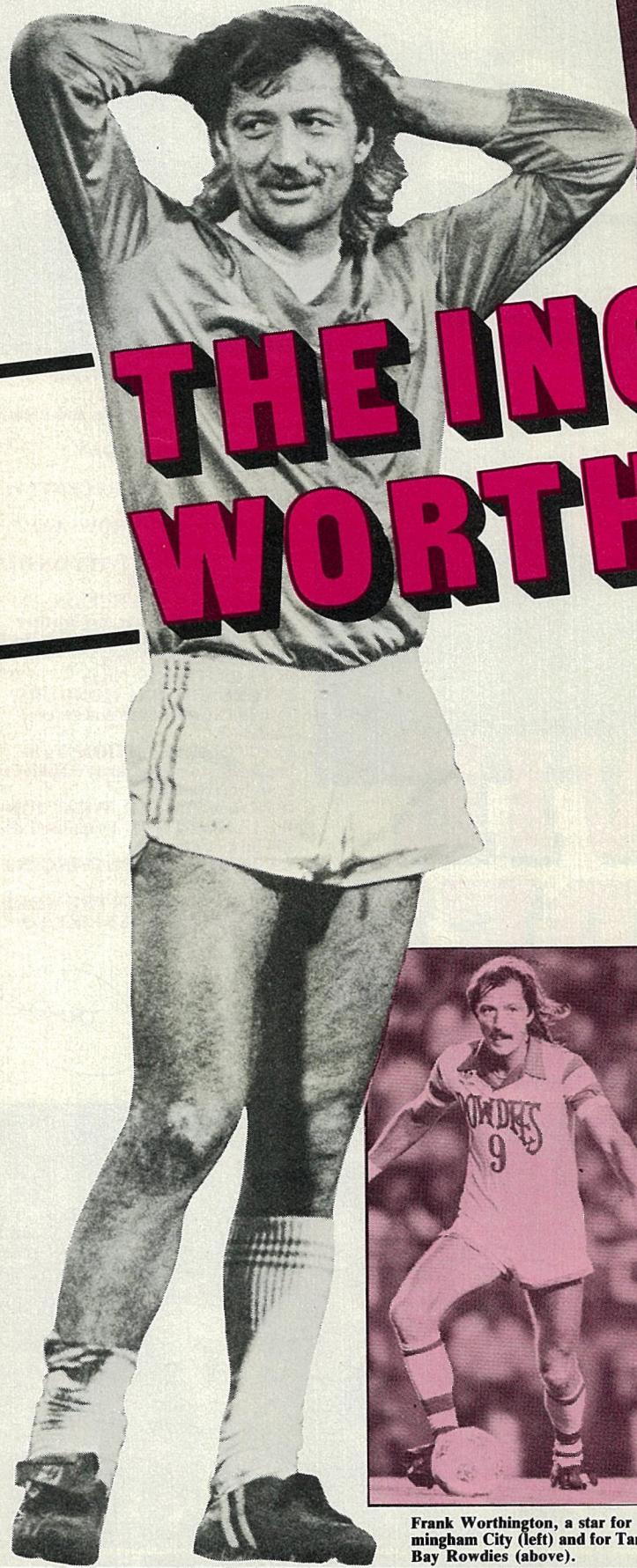
FAVOURITE SINGERS: Eagles,



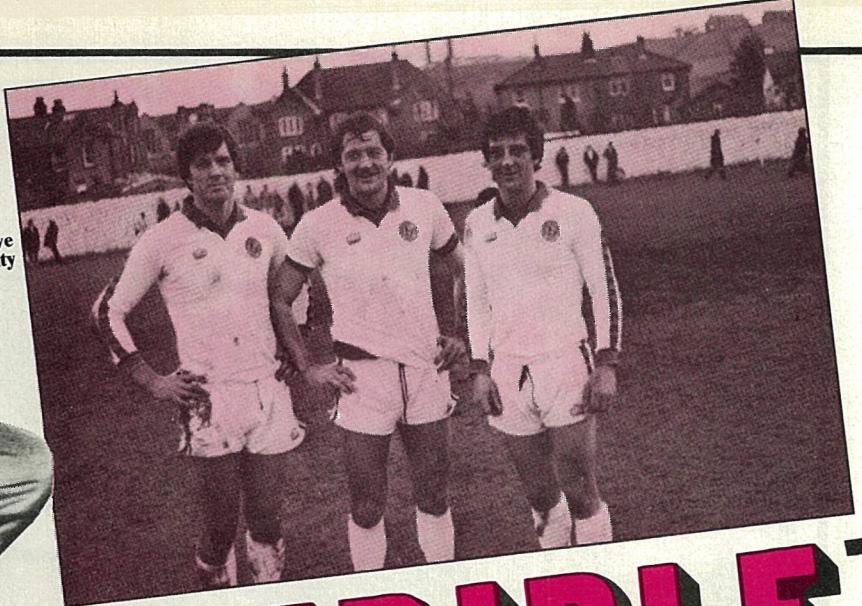
Georgie Best, a member of Davie's best ever all-time XI

CHISTMAS is a time for families to get together. It's a time for story-telling and general happiness. And we can't think of a better story to tell than that of the Worthington family.

Bob, Frank and Dave line up for Bradford City



Frank Worthington, a star for Birmingham City (left) and for Tampa Bay Rowdies (above).



THE INCREDIBLE WORTHINGTONS.

The saying goes "Don't put your daughter on the stage Mrs. Worthington" but the Mrs. Worthington we're going to talk about has a family that's been occupying centre stage for a long time and looks like doing so for many Christmases to come.

Alice Worthington lives in a tidy little house at Shelf, a homely sort of village between Bradford and Halifax.

By now you may have guessed that she's the devoted mum of a famous son Frank, one of soccer's favourite goalscorers.

But that's only part of the story about England's most extraordinary footballing family.

Alice married Eric Worthington who was with Manchester United at the same time as great players like Johnny Carey, Jack Rowley, Stan Pearson and Charlie Mitten.

Shattering

When War intervened Eric was stationed at Rippenden Barracks, near Halifax, and consequently signed for Halifax Town, playing in their League side until a shattering injury ended his career.

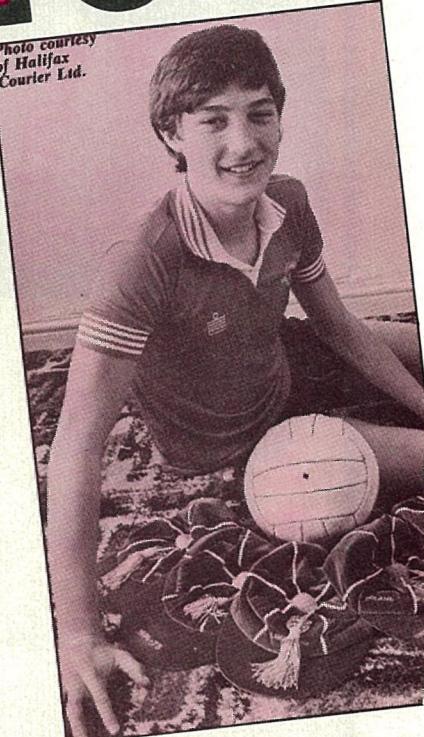
It was the sort of injury that would be treated without any problem these days, but back in the 40's it was enough to curtail a promising career.

Alice herself was no mean footballer would you believe and played in the Women's Air Force team around the same time.

Eventually Eric and Alice decided to start a family and first on the scene was David. Two years later Bob arrived and the third born was Frank.

All three boys were not surprisingly mad on football, egged on at every opportunity by

(Photo courtesy of Halifax Courier Ltd.)



Dave's son Gary has just signed for Manchester United. He hopes to win a few England caps of his own to go with those won by his Uncle Frank (above, in action v Czechoslovakia).

their parents, and by the time they were teenagers all were playing for the local team Shelf United — it would have been renamed Worthington United.

Bob and Dave quickly made their mark in the professional game — both starting out at The Shay with Halifax Town — and thus following in dad's footsteps.

Dave went on to Barrow, Grimsby Town, Southend United and had a spell in the States with Denver Dynamos.

Bob had spells with Middlesbrough and Notts County before linking up again with Dave at Southend.

But Frank, the most talented of

with his entertaining, attacking flair.

Frank loves America and his spells with Philadelphia Fury and Tampa Bay Rowdies have given people across the Atlantic the chance to see his talents for themselves.

Bob and Dave have finished their professional careers, though they still turn out in non-League football, and Bob has even turned to Rugby Union.

Frank is in the twilight of his career, and that you might think is where the story ends — but you couldn't be more wrong.

England's most amazing footballing family

the trio, preferred to make his start with another local club — Huddersfield Town.

He quickly began to win rave notices. He had a languid, almost arrogant style, but the skill was there for all to see. There was hardly a player in the League with a sweeter left foot, or better ball control.

It was inevitable that Frank would move on as sure as night follows day, and he did to Leicester City, where he won England caps and scored goals for his country.

Tragically a dream move to Liverpool fell through on medical grounds, but instead of moping and letting things get on top of him Frank set out to prove he was as fit as anyone in the game.

After a spell with Bolton, where he finished one season as the top goalscorer in the First Division, he moved again, to Birmingham City, where he soon won over the fans

Alice and her 24-year-old daughter Julie both work for Bradford City — to keep their involvement in football very much alive — and now there is every prospect of another member of the Worthington family arriving on the stage.

Dave's 15-year-old son Gary has just signed schoolboy forms for Manchester United, and as one of only six boys taken on at Old Trafford, is rated as having an excellent chance of making the grade.

A left-winger who has the same nonchalant air and breathtaking skill of his famous uncle Frank, Gary is in the Calderdale and Yorkshire schools sides, and decided to join Manchester United out of loyalty — because they asked before Leeds United, who also had him down for a week's trials and coaching.

Fanatic

There could be more little Worthingtons in the football pipeline too, Bob's sons Rob (7) and Joss (3) show every inclination for the game, Rob is a Birmingham City fanatic, and Joss already hero worships Kevin Keegan and wears nothing but a Southampton strip!

There's only one topic when the Worthingtons get together for Christmas.

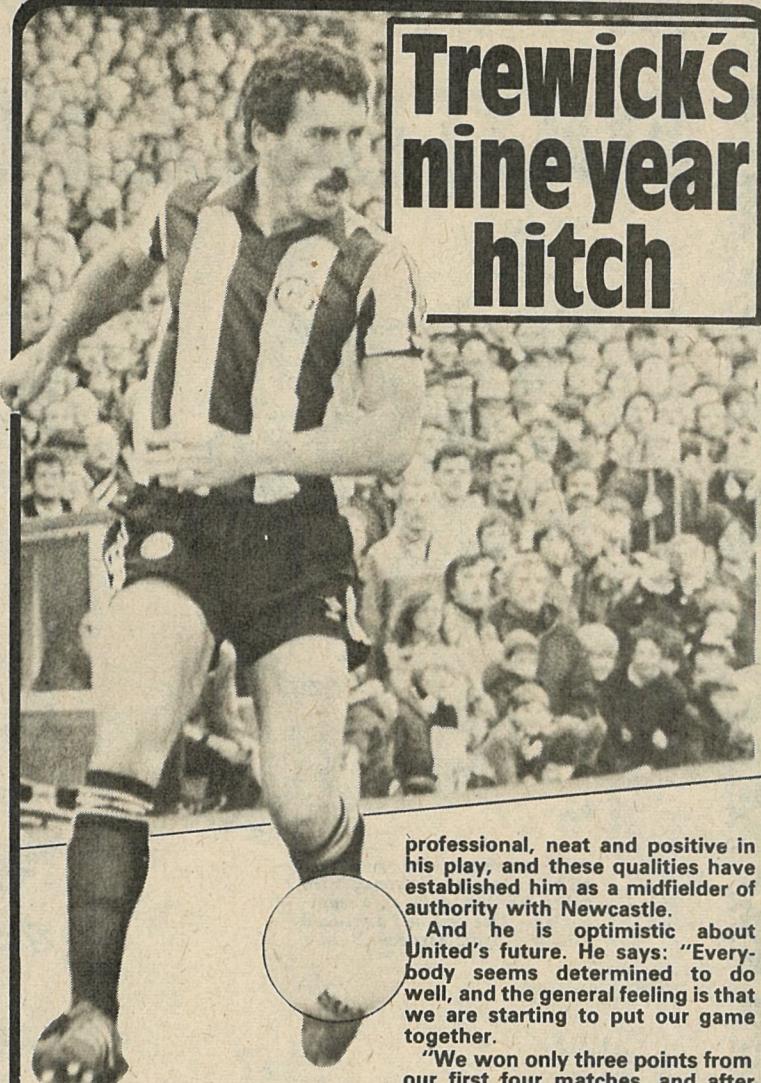
As Dave says: "We always have great family parties, and even though Frank lives in the Midlands now, he comes North to see the rest of us at every opportunity and is trying to buy a house in the Halifax area for when he retires.

"There's been talk of Frank signing for Manchester United, so he may even play with Gary one day.

"We're a true family who all stick by one another. Funnily enough the only time all three brothers have played together was in a charity match when we turned out in Bradford City's colours — that's ironic because they're one of the few clubs that none of us ever played for," he says.



Frank enjoys a twirl round the dance floor with his daughter Kim at a special youngsters disco organised by Birmingham's Beau Brummie Club.



Trewick's nine year hitch

professional, neat and positive in his play, and these qualities have established him as a midfielder of authority with Newcastle.

And he is optimistic about United's future. He says: "Everybody seems determined to do well, and the general feeling is that we are starting to put our game together.

"We won only three points from our first four matches, and after this poor start the players didn't say a lot. But I could sense the mood throughout the club that we were all prepared to try harder, and that success could be just around the corner.

"There is no West Ham to dominate the Second Division this season, and with the promotion race wide open, Newcastle are after definite results.

"Swansea and West Ham have shown that teams promoted from Division Two can hold their own in the top flight.

'Encourage'

"If Newcastle can only finish among the top three, our return to the First Division would mean that our missing fans would come flocking back in their thousands to encourage us to emulate John Toshack's team."

But in looking to the future at Gallowgate, Trewick sensibly mixes his optimism with caution.

"Of course, I appreciate that United aren't as strong as they used to be. An awful lot of hard work is essential in order for us to attract the support we had grown accustomed to.

"But I sincerely believe that in six months time we will be on our way.

"One of the reasons I came to Newcastle was because I thought that our manager, Arthur Cox, was the man to restore some of the club's former glory.

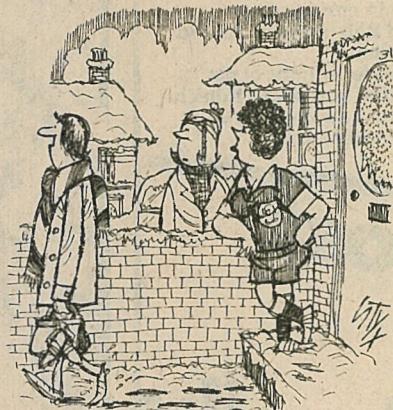
"And my views haven't changed in that respect."

During his years in the Midlands, Trewick developed into a mature

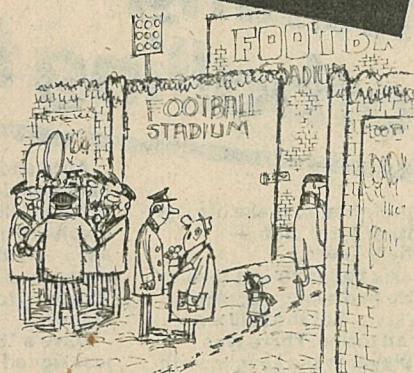
FOOTBALL FUNNIES



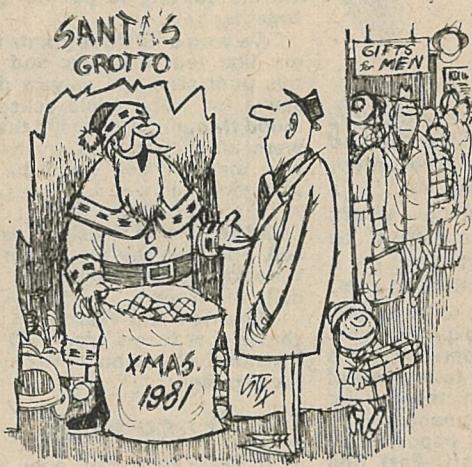
"Yes, he's written off to Santa Claus — all he wants for Christmas is ten tickets for the Cup Final, a season ticket for Liverpool and a pre-paid holiday to Spain next June."



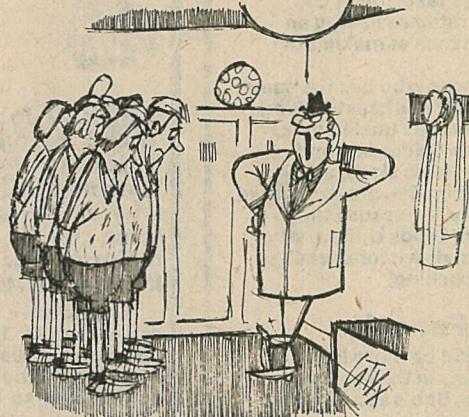
"Christmas Day he's playing up North while I'm refereeing down South. Boxing Day he's down South and I'm up North . . ."



"Special request from the manager. Can you play 'O Come All Ye Faithful'?"



"I suppose your job as a soccer boss and mine as Father Christmas are much the same. Don't last long, do they?"



"At least you made the other lot believe in Father Christmas."



"Breaking away from the traditional red I see. Manchester United indeed . . ."

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NOBBY



'MY TARGETS FOR 1982'



Dannie Cooper scores Rangers' fourth goal against St. Mirren.

WHAT a funny old game football can be at times! Not that long ago Rangers were being sniped at from all angles. We were useless. Half the team were too old. We had no youngsters coming through.

Yet look at the situation today. We are the first Scottish club to win a trophy this season thanks to our League Cup Final success over Dundee United and, of course, we are also the first club to book a place in Europe next season.

I'm not going overboard because of Rangers' success over Dundee United. One victory doesn't make a great team, but it is worth pointing

out that we didn't lose a single game in the League Cup.

John Greig quite rightly said the team played well in all of those games apart from the wet and windy night at Ibrox when we only managed to beat Brechin City 1-0.

But look at the performances from the team before that Final triumph. After breaking my toe

against Partick Thistle I have had ample opportunity to look at my mates in action and I've got to say they have been fairly impressive... and I believe we will get even better.

In my last column I talked about our marvellous 3-3 draw with Celtic at Parkhead so I won't dwell on that encounter. It was a great advert for football.

I don't think we should forget that we took four goals off St Mirren the week before the Old Firm match and there aren't many teams who will do that.

I'm not saying all is well at Ibrox. We know there is more to come, but we can't be that bad if we have won two major Cups in the past seven months against a team which is always being lauded by critics everywhere.

Dundee United are obviously a very good side. They demonstrated that by walloping five goals into the Borussia Munchengladbach net in the UEFA Cup this season, so that must underline and emphasise Rangers' feat in beating them in the Finals of the Scottish Cup and League Cup.

But Rangers will not be content until the Premier Division Championship is back at Ibrox, and that is obviously our No. 1 target.

As I write we are a few points behind our old rivals Celtic, but it is hardly an uncatchable lead. John Greig is always stressing to the players that the League race is a marathon and not a sprint.

I said at the start of the season that I thought Rangers were equipped to land the title and I'm not going to change my mind now. And the Scottish Cup would look nice in our trophy cabinet, too!

What am I looking for in the New Year? Hopefully, I'll keep clear of injuries and get a settled run in the first team.

Funnily enough, my most recent

injury is a complete mystery to me. I don't know how it happened at all. I can't remember any particular clash with a Thistle player when the injury must have occurred.

I've got my fingers firmly crossed that these injuries don't crop up too often in the future.

And what about the World Cup? I'm absolutely desperate to play for my country in Spain. I just hope I haven't been forgotten by Jock Stein. I can only do my best for Rangers and try to attract the attention of the Scotland manager once again.

Criticism

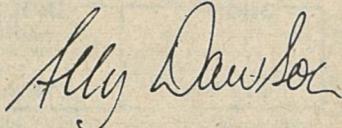
Another thing I would like to see in the New Year is a more balanced criticism of Rangers. Yes, I accept that we have exceedingly high standards and we must be judged by those, but the team will surely be bringing in young players in the coming months and they will need all the encouragement they can get.

Rangers fans have always been very good to me and it's hopeful they will get solidly behind John Greig, the team and the teenagers in the coming crucial months.

And I would like to take this opportunity in saying John Greig has done a magnificent job in trying circumstances recently.

With John Greig leading by example we won't go far wrong. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to football fans everywhere. Keep cheering!

● Turn to page 48 for Danny McGrain's Tartan Talk.



TARTAN TALK FROM
CELTIC'S DANNY
McGRAIN NEXT WEEK



John Greig

THIS time last year the goalscoring exploits of Charlie Nicholas were warming up winter afternoons as he helped shoot Celtic towards the Premier Division title.

Today, though, Charlie's main problem is trying to keep himself warm as he sits on the substitutes' bench while George McCluskey and Frank McGarvey share the main goalscoring duties for the Parkhead side.

Is Charlie in danger of being labelled a one season wonder? Certainly he would have to go into overdrive if he is to match last season's goal haul of 25. Going into December the teenager had scored just three League goals. Is the dream over? Was last season a fluke?

"Not at all," answers manager Billy McNeill. "Charlie's prowess as a goalscorer is there for all to see. You don't lose that ability."

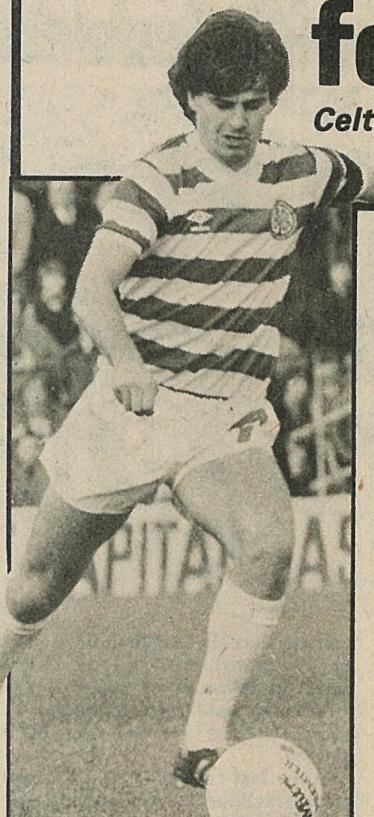
"Last season he was in the team and scoring goals. That kept George McCluskey on the sidelines. McCluskey fought hard to get back into the side and now it's Charlie's turn to sit it out."

"But the experiences of last season benefited George and I'm sure this season's experience will make Charlie an even better player."

"We're just fortunate at Parkhead that we have three proven goalscorers trying to get into the front two positions."

'Nicholas not for sale'

Celtic boss BILLY McNEILL



"Frank McGarvey has been playing well, too, but all three realise that no one has a divine right to be in the side."

"Those first team jerseys go to the players who are on form and doing their job. I don't play favourites at Parkhead."

Arsenal, before moving for Ray Hankin from Vancouver Whitecaps, were hovering on the scene and watched both McCluskey and Nicholas.

McNeill made it abundantly clear that he had no intention of letting either player go, saying: "They are vital to Celtic. You don't come across goalscorers of their calibre and class every day of the week."

So what does the future hold in store for Nicholas? McNeill answers for the teenage sensation of last season who still currently holds the Young Player of the Year Award as well as SHOOT's Most Exciting Scottish Player title.

"Obviously he is far too good to

have just sitting on the substitutes bench," says the Parkhead supremo.

"It's a problem, but the answer ultimately will come from the player. I think it's a problem any manager in Britain would like."

Nicholas watches from the sidelines, but he says: "I'll be ready when I get the call again."

"Everything went so well last season, but naturally football isn't all about dreams coming true."

"I'm working hard at my game and I haven't lost any confidence."

Outstanding

Nicholas, who scored his first League goal for Celtic against Scotland's international goalkeeper Alan Rough last season, has an outstanding talent and is the kind of player who can completely transform a game. As Billy McNeill points out, you do not lose that ability overnight.

He was the kid who succeeded in a man's game last season. He will be back even more determined than ever to succeed.

Charlie accepted last season's accolades with composure. He has accepted this season's situation without grumbles and with a lot of dignity.

The experience will have done him no harm at all. George McCluskey and Frank McGarvey you have been warned!

For as Celtic race away in the chase for the Scottish League Championship title once again, Charlie Nicholas is ready to go!

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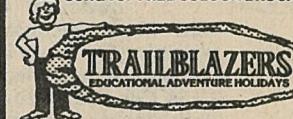
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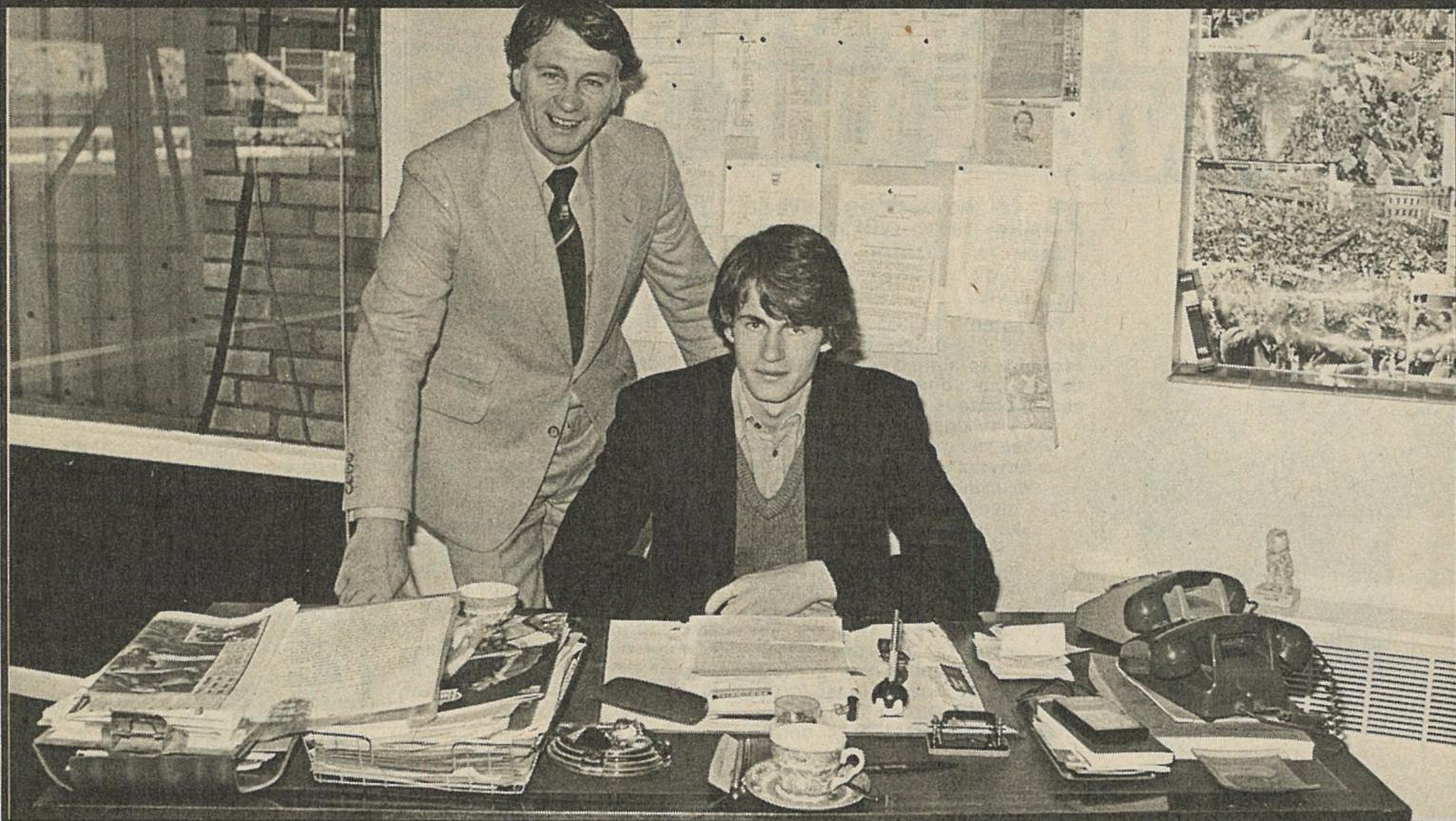
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MY DAD BY MARK ROBSON



'HE NEVER SWITCHES OFF FROM SOCCER'

FOOTBALL is the topic of conversation in millions of homes up and down the country. And it's the same when 18-year-old Mark Robson and his father get together for a chat.

Nothing surprising in that, you might think... except that dad is none other than Ipswich Town manager Bobby Robson, the longest survivor in what is generally regarded to be the most hazardous profession.

Surely the Town boss has had

enough of football by the time he returns home?

But Mark says: "I think one of the main reasons for dad's success is that he finds it difficult to switch off from the job. With him it's 100 per cent commitment."

"There are times at home when he may be reading a book or watching television, but it's obvious his mind is miles away, probably thinking about some aspect of the club."

"Actually, it's rare to have him at home in the evenings for any

length of time. He might be away watching the Ipswich youth or reserve teams, another match or attending a dinner or similar event."

Robson senior has been at Portman Road for close on 13 years, converting Ipswich from a club struggling to stay in the First Division to a big-time outfit capable of challenging for — and often winning — the major trophies.

Mark, now studying to become a P.E. instructor, recalls what it was like at school when the other pupils found out he was Bobby Robson's son.

"At first the other kids couldn't stop talking about it," he says. "And that really brought it home to me that dad was something of a celebrity."

"I used to find that during his first few years in the job when the team weren't doing too well, the children seemed to sense it was a delicate subject. They wouldn't talk about football too much."

"After a few years when Ipswich were enjoying more success I used to take a fair bit of stick when they lost a game."

"I just had to learn to live with it."

Mark admits it can be embarrassing when he's out with his dad.

"He's always recognised, wherever we go. He never refuses an autograph and often stops for a

chat while I tend to hang back and don't get involved."

"Dad doesn't seem to mind these interruptions, even when he's at home. The phone hardly stops ringing but he doesn't object. Mum and I often get fed up, but dad just gets on with it."

Mark has two brothers, Paul (23) and 22-year-old Andrew, who both live in London.

Mark says his dad is always willing to discuss Town's games — win, lose or draw.

Happier

Mark cannot recall his dad being happier than in 1978 when Town won the F.A. Cup.

"It was a terrific occasion for us all and the whole family got together from all over England to celebrate. Dad was very much on a high."

Mark doesn't see as much of Ipswich as he would like as he's started to play regularly each Saturday for a local team. Robson junior is too modest to talk about it, but the facts speak for themselves: nine goals in as many games including a hat-trick.

His dad hasn't had a chance to see him play yet, but Mark jokes: "If he came along he'd find it difficult not to get involved."

"He'd probably end up giving a team-talk!"



HOW TOP STRIKERS COPE... WHEN THE GOALS DRY UP

IT is something every striker fears will happen. There is nothing he can really do except wait... and wait.

For some it is just a minor hiccup, but for others it drags on, escalates to almost comic proportion and, in some cases, can have near-disastrous results.

We're talking, of course, about when the goals dry up: Always a forward's nightmare, often a recurring one, yet it is guaranteed to strike at least once in an attacker's career.

As Swansea's Bob Latchford, the former Birmingham, Everton and England striker, ruefully explains: "The harder you try the worse things seem to get."

He should know the feeling as well as most in the goals business. In 1978 Bob won an award for scoring 30 League goals in a season. The following three seasons he scored 11, six and six in the League and in season 1979-80 he went almost four months without finding the net.

That was a really depressing time for me. The team were not playing well and I was well below par and nothing seemed to be going for us.

"I could not find my rhythm and my goal touch seemed to have deserted me completely. I was in and out of the Everton side but I scored against Stoke to break my run of bad luck and all the pressure was lifted off me," said Latchford.

The most lucid example of the striker's ultimate burden is provided by Manchester United's Garry Birtles. Following his much

Garry Birtles (left) underwent one of the most publicised goal droughts imaginable, but Cyrille Regis (far right) has been scoring well this season. Kenny Dalglish scores against Everton (below) to improve his League goals tally.

publicised £1,250,000 transfer from Nottingham Forest to Old Trafford, Birtles went 11 months and 30 League games before he scored his first League goal for United.

That came against Swansea in September. United won 1-0 and since then the England striker has been finding the net with regularity. "I tried not to let it bother me, although it is always at the back of your mind. I knew I had the ability — you do not become a bad player overnight — but the feeling when I scored against Swansea was quite something," said Birtles.

West Ham's ace marksman David Cross is an ardent admirer of Birtles. "I have a lot of admiration for Garry for the way he kept going through such a lean spell. Although everyone was cracking jokes and having a good old laugh, I saw Garry play at the time and he was still looking for the ball and getting into useful positions.

'Good Run'

"It is easy to get into scoring positions when you're in the middle of a good run, but players who do not hide when the chips are down are worth their salt," said Cross.

Another player who has recently suffered a similar fate to Birtles is Tottenham's Steve Archibald. Soon after his £800,000 transfer from Aberdeen in the summer of 1980 Archibald said: "It's easier to score goals in England."

Yet this season, with a third of the matches completed, Steve was facing a personal goal shortage.

"It's not as if Garth Crooks and I are not getting the service," he admitted. "Support from midfield is better than ever. In the end you become obsessed with the problems.

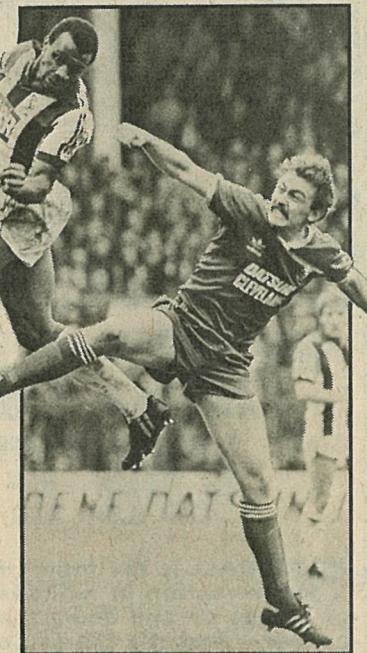
"Basically it's a lack of confidence, but I'm sure once I get one goal they will start to flow again. It

is particularly annoying as last season I was leading First Division scorer with 25 goals," said Steve.

Still, Steve's in good company. His Scotland team-mate, Liverpool's Kenny Dalglish, went 25 League games spread over 11 months before he hit the goal trail again against Brighton in October.

West Bromwich Albion's striker Cyrille Regis would wear England's number nine shirt if he produced more consistent performances.

A proven goalscorer, Regis, has suffered some terrible patches since Ronnie Allen plucked him from the obscurity of Isthmian



League football for a bargain basement £5,000.

Regis, a candidate for England's World Cup campaign, reckons he is a 20-goal a season striker but still gets embarrassed when critics remind him of the 1979-80 League campaign when he scored only eight goals in the First Division after missing the first two months through injury.

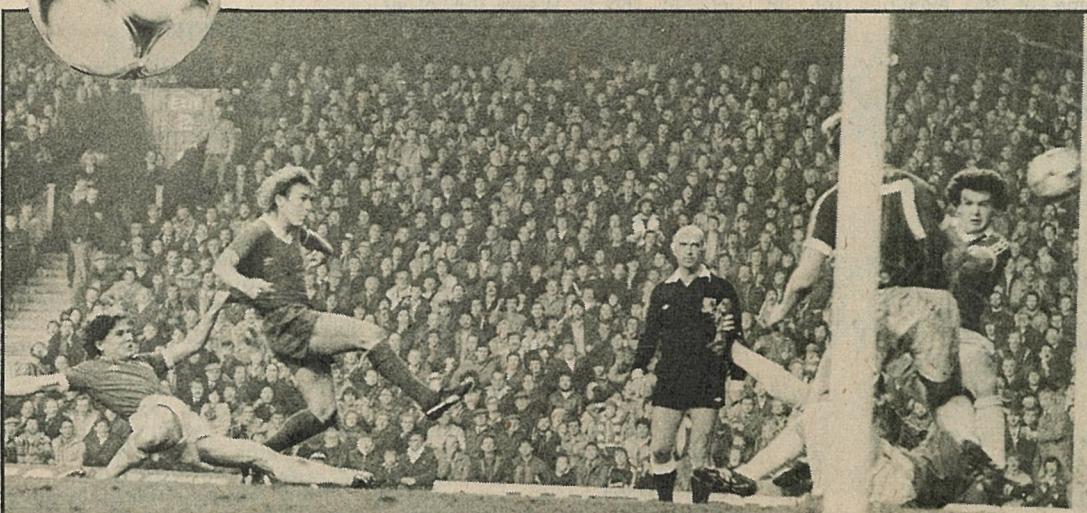
Last season he cracked 17 League and Cup goals and is in top form this season.

"It's all about consistency," admits Regis, whom Ronnie Allen has pledged to make an England star in his second term of management at Albion.

"Except for the season when I had my cartilage out, I've scored around 17 or 18 goals a season but I think I can improve on that and get past the 20 mark."

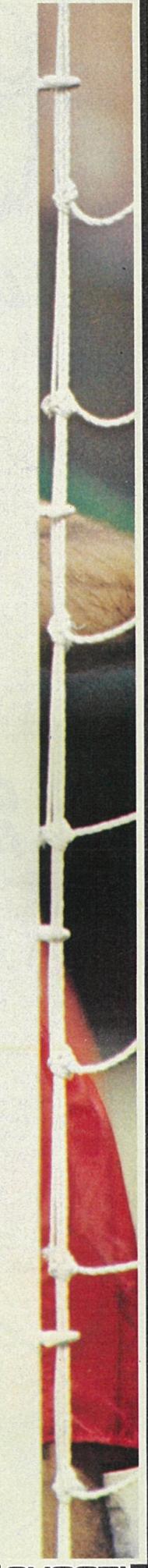
Ronnie Allen's softly, softly method of persuasion is paying greater dividends with Regis than Ron Atkinson's methods.

"Nobody likes to be shouted at," says Regis. "Sometimes I would have preferred it if Ron had taken people to one side and not done it in full view of everyone."





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Dear Santa...

A Lucky suit

Dear Santa,

I heard you once left Don Revie a lucky suit that he wore to every Leeds match — and it didn't do any harm during their great days while he was in charge, did it? Would you have another that I could wear to our home matches?

Our form on our own ground has been a complete mystery this season. We've had some good wins away, but we won only one of the first nine games at home.

I'm not very superstitious, but if you could produce some lucky omen to reward our faithful fans it would be a big help. (I'd prefer a suit, because I've only got one of my own!)

I'd also like two or three players so that I don't have to manage on a squad of 15 any more. It's either that or some tablets to calm my nerves, because having to play my two full-backs at centre-half in an F.A. Cup tie didn't do them any good at all.

Happy Christmas

Barry Lyons (York City)

Grounds for a laugh

Dear Santa,

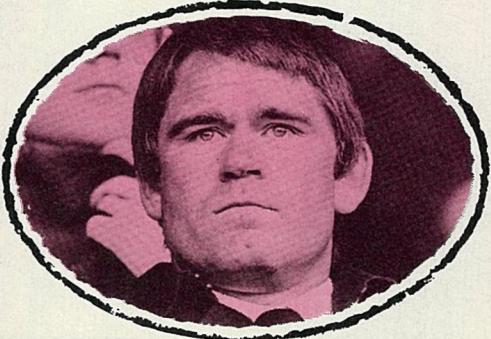
I'm not quite sure how you'd get it on the sleigh — and it certainly wouldn't fit down the chimney — but could we have our own training ground please? I've got a promising squad of players, and we've a chance of promotion, but I do need somewhere to prepare them properly.

At the moment we borrow two pitches that belong to a local club, and as everybody at Parley Sports treats us so well I don't like to take the lads out in bad weather and churn up their grass. If you could spare an acre or two from Greenland we'd be very grateful.

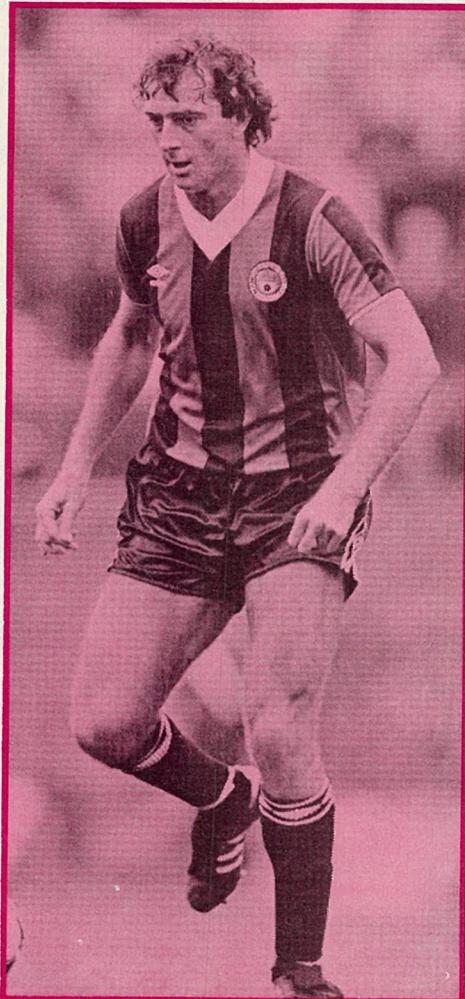
I'd also like a box of Christmas crackers with some paper hats and funny jokes. People in football have got so dour and glum it's frightening — we could all do with a good laugh.

And if you've got a spare set of Fourth Division Championship medals I promise not to open them until April!

David Webb (Bournemouth)

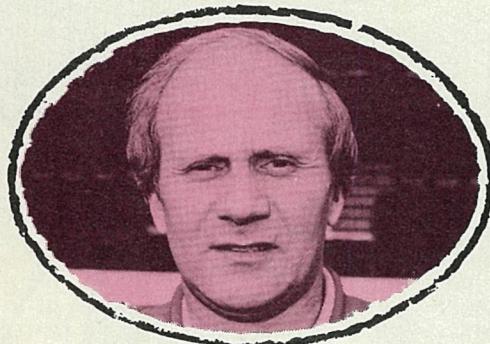


Trevor Francis ~ gift wrapped



NOTHING but problems... that's the sad truth of life in the League's basement. So SHOOT invited some Fourth Division managers to let Father Christmas help them out — and then took a peep at their letters before we passed them on to Santa.

Make mine a million



Dear Santa,

I hardly know where to start this letter. Things at Hull have been allowed to slide so much over the past few years that you'd need a fleet of sleighs and a herd of reindeer to bring everything we need.

It's sad to look around our ground which could hold a First Division crowd of 43,000 and see only 3,000 fans watching Fourth Division matches.

But when you see all the red figures on the bank statement it isn't difficult to see why the ground has been neglected.

On the field we've no problems that Alvin Martin, Phil Thompson and Trevor Brooking couldn't solve between them. But one way and another it would want all three of them and a big bag with £1 million in it under the tree on Christmas morning to make me really happy.

Can you help? Please?

Mike Smith (Hull City)

A coach for all seasons

Dear Santa,

Please could we have a modern luxury coach like the one our rich neighbours Ipswich travel the country in? Our own is the best we can manage, but in the Fourth Division we have so many long trips North that a more comfortable one could make the world of difference.

We have to save hotel bills when we can, and that causes some awful trips. For instance when we went to Tranmere for a midweek game we left Colchester at 10 in the morning.

We drove all day with only a short stop at Chester for a meal. On the way back we left at 10pm, and didn't get home until a quarter past three in the morning. And we lost the match!

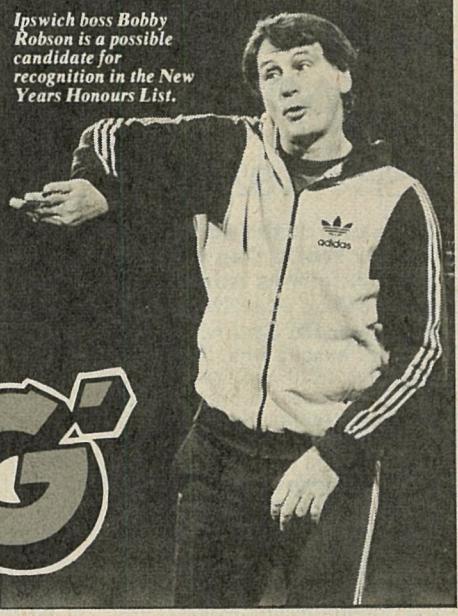
Bobby Roberts (Colchester United)

Frank Lord (Hereford)



Many soccer personalities have been decorated. 1982 may see a few more

GOING FOR A GONG



Ipswich boss Bobby Robson is a possible candidate for recognition in the New Years Honours List.

THE New Year Honours List will be published soon, and that knowledge inevitably prompts two questions:

Who, if anybody, among soccer personalities of the day, will be among the honours recipients and, who, among those currently engaged in the game, is most worthy of a decoration?

Far more than will be generally realised have been so honoured already since the first-ever Football League professional was included in one of these Lists.

He was the late Tom Whittaker, former

Arsenal left-back and manager, who was awarded the M.B.E. in 1946.

Since then 44 more decorations have been bestowed upon men who were or had been League players. Stanley Matthews (1965), Alf Ramsey (1967), Matt Busby (1968), and Walter Winterbottom (1978) having been knighted, with 16 having received the M.B.E., 15 the O.B.E., and nine the C.B.E.

Current players who have been honoured include Arsenal goalkeeper Pat Jennings, West Ham midfield star Trevor Brooking, and Crewe's former Liverpool star Ian Callaghan.

Among current managers who have received the call to be decorated by the Queen at

Buckingham Palace have been: Ron Greenwood (above left, England), Billy Bingham (Northern Ireland), Bob Paisley (Liverpool), Jack Charlton (Sheffield Wednesday), Alan Mullery (Charlton Athletic), Emlyn Hughes (Rotherham United), John Trollope (Swindon Town), and Arfon Griffiths (Crewe Alexandra).

On the eve of a new Honours List it's an intriguing and fascinating point for speculation. Who, among the many hundreds in Football League activity today, is most entitled to be added to those honoured previously?

Four leading personalities who have *not* been decorated and whose names, at random, may be mentioned are managers Brian Clough (Forest), Bobby Robson (Ipswich Town), and Lawrie McMenemy (Southampton), with Kevin Keegan taking a prominent place among the players, although, of course, many others could be named.

If it was left to you to decide who, from the world of soccer, would be included in the 1982 Honours List who would you include?



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West Ham star Trevor Brooking (left) has already gained recognition for his tremendous services to the game of football.





SHOOT WRITERS REPORT FROM CENTRAL AMERICA

ESPAÑA 82

IT is one of the supreme ironies of the 1982 World Cup that two countries who are virtually at war, constantly invading each other's territory, should qualify together for Spain.

That's exactly what happened in the CONCACAF group as Honduras and El Salvador become Central America's representatives in Spain. And although El Salvador have reached the Finals before (in 1970), for Honduras qualification is one of the country's highlights since gaining independence in 1821 from... Spain.

Even as Honduras and El Salvador played out a 0-0 draw in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa, the setting of the CONCACAF play-offs, there was fighting on the border 100 miles away.

The teams met in a similar situation in 1969 and the game sparked off a Four Day War, when 2,000 civilians, mainly Hondurans, were killed.

It's something of a miracle that El Salvador even have a national team, let alone one to qualify for the Finals. In the past two years almost 30,000 people have been killed in the capital, San Salvador, and earlier this year one El Salvador star was shot through the head, his body left in a dustbin. Because of his haircut someone

El Primitivo leads the unknowns

thought he was a terrorist...

It's impossible to separate soccer from the drama of everyday life in a country where civil war rages. The El Salvador players were genuinely worried that some extremist group would use them as a target before they left for Tegucigalpa; once there they wanted to phone home every day to see if their families were safe, but couldn't afford this simple luxury.

The El Salvador squad has a psychiatrist working with the players, talking to them about their problems, trying to put them in the right frame of mind.

It must have worked. El Salvador qualified, even if they did only score two goals in five games, one of those a penalty. I have to say, though, that on all my soccer



Honduras dangerman Roberto Figueroa.

travels around the world, never have I met a friendlier, seemingly happier or more open squad of players. The only 'threat of death' around the El Salvador squad is that they would kill me with kindness.

They'll be one of the personality teams of Spain, if only for the country they come from and the state it's in. I predict one of their players will catch the eye: goalkeeper Ricardo Mora, aged 19 and with an Afro-like hair-do.

Chances are he'll have plenty of opportunity to shine and watching him in the play-offs it was difficult to fault his play.

One player who will certainly stand out is the Honduran captain Ramon Madariaga, known as 'El Primitivo'. As a boy he had smallpox, which has left him with

The untameable

THREE could hardly have been a less appetising opening to the African World Cup play-offs between Morocco and Cameroon. A week before the first game, Morocco left-winger Mustapha Derouich was found dead in a Senegal hotel, where the team were staying while training, in mysterious circumstances.

Mustapha and the rest of the Moroccan team had returned to their hotel in Dakar at one in the morning after an official reception.

The left-winger found it too hot to sleep so he went out for a walk.

Some time later room-mate Abdelkhir Tissir realised Mustapha hadn't returned and after failing to find him in any of the other players' rooms organised a search party.

They found Mustapha's trousers and shoes beside the swimming-pool, but it was too dark to see if he was still in the water. Midfielder Chicha dived in and soon discovered Mustapha's body.

He had received a hefty blow on the back of his head...

Not surprising, then, that Morocco embarked on their World Cup eliminator with Cameroon in a none-too-happy frame of mind.

Amid the shimmering heat, the dust and palm trees of Casablanca there was an air of bleak pessimism about their chances of beating Cameroon, despite Morocco's impressive record of conceding

just two goals in the qualifiers against Senegal, Zambia and Egypt.

Casablanca 1981 is a far cry from the Casablanca of Humphrey Bogart's classic movie. It's hot, dusty, full of beggars and if one of the local buses turned up in your High Street the whole population would come out to look at it.

Anyone not speaking Arabic or French in Morocco is a target for permanent rip-offs — or worse. Spanish TV sent two people and Spain manager Santamaría sent 'spy' García Traid; all three were robbed within 36 hours.

Hygiene is non-existent in many places. People relieve themselves wherever it takes their fancy and families actually live on the central reservation of the main roads.

The background to the match in Morocco was not particularly inviting. Even Ali Bouhadar, sports editor of *Maroc Soir* admitted: "There's a lot of bad feeling. The game has been switched from Casablanca to Kenitra at the last moment.

"It should have been played in Casablanca where the stadium holds 100,000, but the authorities feared security problems if Morocco lose. And that's what almost everyone expects..."

An 85-mile drive alongside drought-parched fields, eucalyptus forests and heart-rending shanty towns brought us to Morocco's hide-out at the Firdaus Hotel.

Here at least the mood was more confident, with manager Just Fontaine giving us a tremendous welcome.

Fright

The players remained shy, amazed that they could be of interest to a British soccer magazine; skipper Dolmi literally shook with fright when asked for an interview.

The Cameroon players, professionals as opposed to Morocco's amateurs, had a slightly different attitude. "Got anything for me then?" said their captain when asked for an interview.

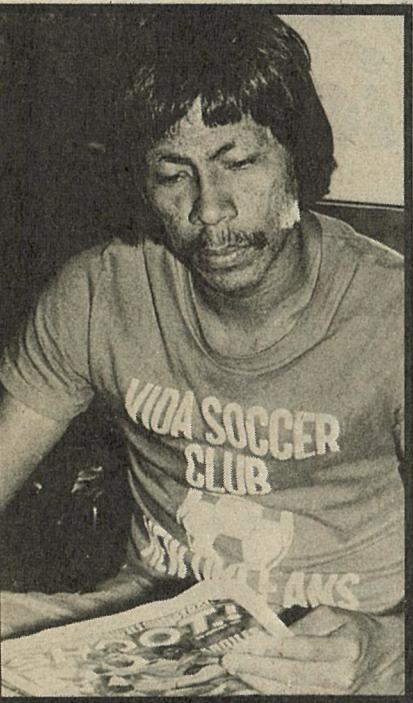
The "Untameable Lions" of Cameroon were obviously more accustomed to big match pressures. Even the absence of African Footballer of the Year Jean Manga Onguener hadn't shaken their confidence and Yugoslav manager Branko Zutic seemed



quietly pleased with results on the tour of Tunisia, where he'd been trying to persuade his flamboyant ball-players to adopt a more serious, safety-first approach to the all-important away fixture.

Match day dawned sunny and hot, with the temperature nudging the 90's. And for just one day the small town of Kenitra became the

AND AFRICA WHERE THE WORLD CUP IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT



horrific facial scars and at 24 he could quite easily pass for nearer 40.

He's a good player, though, the general of the Honduran midfield. And Roberto Figueroa, a deep lying winger in the Steve Coppell mould, could also make a name for himself. His free-kicks rank alongside anything South American and Europe can offer.

Stopper Anthony 'Tonny' Costly, a big, black centre-half would be a match for Justin Fashanu on the pitch or in the boxing ring. And a Honduran forward with the name of Jimmy James Bailey has a strange ambition: to see a cricket

LEFT ... Nothing primitive about Madariaga's choice of reading!
ABOVE ... Bath time for a poor Honduran family.
BELOW ... El Salvador's 'keeper Mora makes another fine save.



match in Kingston, Jamaica, where his parents come from. He speaks English with a heavy Jamaican accent and although born in Honduras spoke English at home and had to learn Spanish.

Overall, the CONCACAF play-offs were close; with one match to play any one of Cuba, Canada, Mexico or El Salvador could have joined Honduras in the Finals. Poor Haiti went home with all sorts of problems — at least, some of the players went home.

Word had it that quite a few were going to defect in Miami during the stop-over in the USA.

"They'll have a better life in a refugee camp, where they'll have regular food and a bed," says Frantz St. Lot, a Haitian who plays for Los Angeles Aztecs. "At home you're rich if you earn £10 a week.

"Our F.A. is full of crooks. The players never receive a penny for playing for Haiti. It's the same

when the United Nations sends us money for relief. It never gets past the administrators. I've never seen so many Mercedes in my life — the only trouble they have is not running over the people who live in the kerb . . ."

St. Lot has reason to be bitter. In Honduras he fell ill, so ill he almost died, yet had to find and pay for medical treatment himself.

Canada disappointed; they failed to take advantage of their superior physical strength. Cuba came and went, rarely smiling and living a spartan existence in a training camp a mile up a dirt track. As soccer rates below water-polo in Castro's country, perhaps it isn't surprising.

Protection

When Mexico returned home after their awful performances in Argentina three years ago the players needed police protection. Even so, irate fans still managed to beat-up one or two of their ex-heroes.

The day after Honduras qualified there were advertisements for trips to the World Cup, but in a country where 48 per cent of the population is illiterate, begging is common and the only priority for most is their next meal, going to Spain will remain a dream.

Still, qualification for both Honduras and El Salvador gave the people of these two wretched countries a little light relief, even if the bullets are still flying and people still dying.

● CHRIS DAVIES

chanted slogans against Fontaine; and lit bonfires on the terracing.

In the meantime, the Moroccan team continued to press forward, but found Cameroon goalkeeper Thomas N'Kono (a name to watch for in the future) unbeatable.

When the final whistle sounded, the entire Cameroon team raced to salute their band of supporters in the main stand while the Moroccan fans filed silently out.

Cameroon had placed one foot firmly in the World Cup Finals, and Morocco was left to contemplate what might have been if only that penalty had gone in.

But there was no bitterness after the game — only resignation. "They were better than us, and they deserved to win. We told you we'd lose . . ."

Cameroon won in the return, 2-1 to join Algeria in Spain.

● GRAHAM TURNER

And in the 40th minute the Moroccans' fate was sealed. Milla passed to Jacksonville Tea Men striker Jean-Pierre Tokoto, who beat Filali on the right and hit a fine cross-shot high into the net before disappearing under a heap of jubilant green-shirted teammates.

As Ali Bouhadar had predicted, this was too much for the fans. They whistled the Moroccan team as they ran out for the second-half;



capital of Morocco.

The gates of the stadium were flung open at 9am — six hours before kick-off — and in no time at all the ground's two stands were full.

Thousands of soldiers were on patrol both inside and outside the ground, and the rhythm of African drumming could be heard from a

LEFT ... Cameroon's Paul Bahoken (light strip) beats Morocco's Bouchkachech Hocine to the ball.
BELOW ... King of the Road — to Spain! Cameroon's Roger Milla and coach Branco Zutic.

mile away.

Even though the Kenitra stadium held less than 20,000, the noise was incredible as the game got under way, and things seemed to be going the home team's way when both Abdellatif and Aziz rattled the Cameroon bar in the opening ten minutes.

But the crowd was numbed in the 15th minute, when a misunderstanding in the Moroccan defence let in Roger Milla, and the Cameroon striker was brought down by Jawad as he was closing in on the goal. Emmanuel Kunde slotted home the penalty to give the visitors a shock lead.

And seven minutes later the Moroccans received another cruel psychological blow when a through ball from Chicha put Aziz clean through, and the Senegalese referee gave a penalty when he was brought crashing to the ground by Cameroon goalkeeper Thomas N'Kono. Chicha placed the spot kick to the 'keeper's right, but N'Kono plunged to make a fine save.

THE West German squad is recording an LP entitled "Olé España." Seems as if the Germans play football better than they sing. It took sound technicians almost a day to sort out the best positions for the microphone — with the worst singers not too near the mikes!

Schumacher look-alike?

WHEN West Germany beat Albania 8-0 recently Toni Schumacher was not in goal. The Cologne keeper was unfit and Immel of Borussia Dortmund played instead.

Schumacher was still at the game and afterwards went to join the rest of the lads in the beer room . . . but was stopped as he didn't have any special identification.

"Anyone can say he's Toni Schumacher," said the attendant. "I must say you look like him, but I'm not sure enough to let you in!"

REF SENDS-OFF LINESMAN!

STRANGE incident in a regional game in Aviles, Spain.

The referee was showing a lot of yellow cards, even though the match wasn't particularly tough, and apparently one of the linesmen began to make signals that he didn't agree with several of the referee's decisions.

The referee finally became so incensed with his rebellious linesman that he went to the touchline and showed him the red card!



Compiled by CHRIS DAVIES

News flashes

- Eintracht Frankfurt's 9-2 home win over Werder Bremen was a remarkable scoreline for the current defence-dominated game, but is far from being a Bundesliga record. Champions Bayern Munich beat Borussia Dortmund by 11-1 in November, 1971, and Borussia Mönchengladbach did even better by comparison when they hammered the same Dortmund by 12-0 (the highest ever) as recently as April, 1978.

- AS Roma and their Brazilian star Falcao are suing an Italian newspaper for £1/4 million for using their respective colour

- photos in an advertising campaign — without their consent.

- Italian fans wanting to see the whole of the World Cup have two big problems. As in Britain, a travel agency has cornered the match ticket market, selling only package tours. But the big snag is that with the Italian economy in a very bad way Italians are only allowed to spend £550 on holidays abroad, and the package for the whole of the World Cup in Spain costs just over £2,000.

- Although the final play-offs in the World Cup Asia-Oceania group were

set up for home and away games Red China and Saudi Arabia met twice in neutral Kuala Lumpur . . . because the two countries do not recognise each other and have broken off diplomatic relations. The Chinese government refused to grant entry visas to any of the Arabs, even the players.

- Servette (Geneva) began this season with 11 consecutive Swiss League wins to open up a five point lead at the top. But at the 12th hurdle away to Champions FC Zurich (in second place) they went down 3-2. The game pulled in 21,323 fans, which was 6,000 more than the crowd for the recent World Cup match again Rumania!

THE majority of Brazilian players have a problem they have to overcome when they start playing at a higher grade — learning to play in football boots.

The vast majority of boys who come to the professional clubs have always been used to playing barefoot, either on the beaches or on the specially provided State packed earth pitches.

Consequently, when the player starts at a club he uses football boots, probably for the first time, and the effect is most unusual.

Junior (left) Brazil's left-back, said: "I felt as if I had been born in the backwoods and been given shoes to

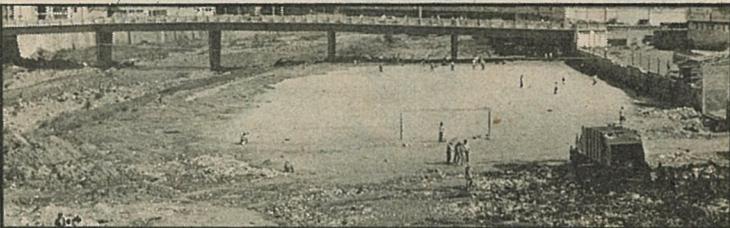
NOT RELEGATED

WHILE Dynamo Kiev were romping home in the Soviet League, there was a heartbreak story at the other end of the table, where Ska Rostov and Tavria Simferopol are relegated.

Tail-enders Pajtakor Tashkent however, didn't go down — they were granted a special privilege of being exempt from relegation for three years after losing several of their squad in an air accident.

SPANISH club Sevilla are having problems with their Brazilian star Carlos Alberto 'Pintinho' this season — so much so that the board of directors has threatened to employ a private detective to shadow him if there are any more reports of late-night dancing and drinking in discotheques.

FOOTBALL — IT'S RUBBISH!



HONDURAS are looking forward to playing in the World Cup Finals for the first time next summer. With so much poverty and so few facilities it's a small miracle this Central American republic qualified. Just look at this pitch in the capital of Tegucigalpa. It's surrounded by an open rubbish tip and having actually stood by the side of the pitch I can assure you that the smell is quite unlike anything else I've ever sampled while watching kids kick a ball around.

wear for the first time.

"I spent the next 20 minutes as if I was walking on eggs."

Actually it is logical when you consider that a player must suddenly learn to cope with balancing on six or eight studs which increases his height by almost an inch.

On that extra inch he must dribble, pass, run and tackle when he has been doing this, all his life, on the flat of his feet.

Even the professional players become very attached to a pair of boots.

Didi, Brazil's 1958/62 World Cup player, once discovered a trainer about to throw away a very old pair of his boots.

"Hold it," he said, "I can't use them any more, but put them back into my locker next to my new boots, then at night the old boots will teach the new boots all they need to know."

A new player arriving at a club to train had a very poor game and the manager was about to tell him "no chance of being signed," when the player said: "Please, I couldn't train with my favourite boots today."

The manager immediately gave him another chance, whereupon the man played brilliantly and was signed and today is the centre-back of Vitoria of Bahia — the manager, Tim, is now boss of Peru!



STORMY AFFAIR

IN THE Moroccan League, the derby between Kenitra arch-rivals Athletic and Renaissance proved to be a stormy affair.

In the second-half Athletic lost full-back Majed with a broken arm, and then had Chassef and Abdellatif sent-off.

As they'd already made their two substitutions, Athletic had to battle on with only eight men and finally lost 2-0 with goals from Hassan Fakir and Touharia.

STATE OF THE LEAGUES

WOODCOCK SET FOR A DOUBLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cologne	15	9	4	2	31	12	22
HSV	15	8	5	2	42	19	20
Bayern	15	9	2	4	35	25	20
M'gladbach	15	7	6	2	29	33	20
E. Frankfurt	15	8	2	5	40	27	18
Bremen	15	7	4	4	26	26	18

Tony Woodcock is set to win a West German Championship medal to go with the one he collected with Nottingham Forest.

Woodley and Cologne are the team of the moment in the Bundesliga and under the circumstances it's extremely unlikely the German club will even listen to any transfer talk.

Cologne striker Klaus Fischer scored his 215th Bundesliga goal last month to put him in third place in the all-time list. Fischer is now 31 and Gerd Muller's total of 365 seems very safe.

Incidentally, the Bundesliga recently had its 300th 0-0 draw, but the most popular score in the League's 18 years is still 2-1, on 721 occasions.

• Congratulations for Woodcock after scoring against Fortuna Dusseldorf.



CUDDLY KALTZ

HAMBURGER SV and West Germany defender Manny Kaltz suddenly appeared without his beard.

When asked why he was clean-shaven he replied: "My daughter Jamina was in hospital for two months and now she's home I shaved off my beard to give me a better chance to cuddle her . . ."

CRUYFF COMEBACK

JOHAN Cruyff, seen below in his previous spell with Ajax, made a successful comeback for the Dutch club earlier this month, scoring in their 4-1 win over Haarlem once again wearing the number 14 jersey he made famous.

I understand a businessman is willing to put up £160,000 for Cruyff's salary for the rest of the season, so it won't cost Ajax a penny.

IT'S NOT very often that both goalkeepers are sent off, but that's exactly what happened in Argentina when Union met Instituto de Córdoba in a National Championship match. Referee Abel Gnecco first sent off Union 'keeper Pampido after an incident with rival striker Tévez. And then Instituto 'keeper Minutti also received the red card for time-wasting.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
★ BARCELONA'S young defender
★ Manolo is dividing his time between football and military service this year, but he was recently out of action for three weeks confined to barracks after a breach of army discipline.
★ Apparently he was caught with a cassette-recorder in his uniform pocket and was listening, via headphones, to rock music while on guard duty.
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

CATASTROPHE IN COLOMBIA

SEVENTEEN dead and 45 seriously injured was the balance of a tragic accident in Colombia when part of a stand collapsed shortly before the kick-off of the Deportes Tolima — Deportivo Cali League game.

Around 30,000 fans had packed into the Manuel Murillo Toro stadium to see the surprise leaders take on the mighty Cali and by all accounts one of the 80-ton concrete supports in the east stand gave way and fell on to the terraces below.

Not surprisingly, the fans stampeded on to the pitch to avoid falling masonry, but there are believed to be bodies still buried under the piles of rubble, and the final death toll could be a good deal higher.

Significantly, the Manuel Murillo Toro stadium was closed last year when part of the terracing collapsed while the ground was empty.



WITH Dutch players very popular in England these days and Frans Thijssen even the English Footballer of the Year it is perhaps surprising to note that there are six British players with top clubs in Holland. The best known is probably Steve Goble who played in Division One with Norwich City and is now with FC Groningen.

English hooligans are posing a World Cup problem but other countries also face problems of this kind, particularly Holland and West Germany.

In Holland the First Division match between FC Den Haag and FC Utrecht in The Hague was abandoned by the referee . . . because two Molotov cocktails were thrown by spectators.

NO AWAY DAYS FOR BARCELONA!

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	13	9	3	1	40	12	25
Sociedad	13	8	3	2	25	13	20
Real Madrid	13	8	2	3	22	13	18
Zaragoza	13	7	4	2	21	15	18
Betis	13	7	0	6	19	14	14
Valencia	13	6	2	5	19	17	14

Before the big derby between Barcelona and Espanyol the Barcelona board offered Espanyol £300,000 in cash if they'd agree to play the fixture in Barcelona's Nou Camp stadium instead of Espanyol's Sarriá stadium.

Espanyol president Manuel Meler immediately snapped: "This is inadmissible. At this rate Barcelona could use their economic power to persuade all the clubs in the First Division to play in their stadium and win the League by playing all 34 matches at home. I find this suggestion ethically and morally distasteful . . . Barcelona won 4-0!"

HARD TIMES FOR BRADY AND JORDAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	10	7	1	2	16	5	15
Inter	10	5	5	0	13	7	15
Roma	10	5	4	1	15	9	14
Fiorentina	10	5	3	2	10	7	13
Napoli	10	2	7	1	9	6	11
Avellino	10	3	4	3	5	4	10

The length of the table has been separating Liam Brady's Juventus and Joe Jordan's AC Milan, although Milan moved off the bottom with a 1-1 draw against Roma.

Neither former Football League stars is having a particularly outstanding season — Milan have scored just three goals in their first ten games.

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	15	12	1	2	40	15	25
AZ '67	15	9	3	3	33	16	21
Ajax	15	9	4	3	51	25	20
Sparta	15	9	4	3	30	17	20
G.A. Eagles	15	7	4	4	27	10	18
Feyenoord	15	6	6	3	34	28	18

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anderlecht	15	9	3	3	28	17	21
Ghent	15	8	5	2	23	12	21
Antwerp	15	8	4	3	24	17	20
Courtrai	15	8	5	2	23	17	20
Lierse	15	8	4	3	22	17	20
S. Liege	15	7	5	3	22	15	19

'SCHUSTER WILL PLAY'

BERND SCHUSTER is still insisting that he won't play in next year's World Cup Finals, and has even said that he's booked a holiday for next June!

The West German's manager at Barcelona, Udo Lattek, insists however that the 21-year-old midfielder will represent his country.

"It's entirely up to Bernd," he says, "but the moment he tells me that he would like to play, I will do my best to solve the problems he has with Jupp Derwall and Paul Breitner. As both are close friends, I believe I can do it fairly easily. I just hope he changes his mind."

SPANISH Second Division leaders Elche are determined to attract more fans to their magnificent World Cup stadium at Altaizax. Not only have they decided to give away thousands of sandwiches at night games, but they've now agreed to reduce their prices and offer special terms for schoolchildren.

Racing RAP

THE ARGENTINE Football Association has dished out a severe punishment to Racing Córdoba after some directors of the club made scathing criticisms of the authorities.

Racing have been officially suspended for 50 days, which means that they'll be prohibited from staging matches in their stadium and that all proceeds from matches played in other venues will go directly to the F.A.

The decision has raised a storm of protest in Córdoba, even though Argentine regulations permit suspensions of up to five years for this kind of offence.

ALAN Dodd starts every season with one aim. "To play for Stoke City from first game to last — and to help win a major trophy for the club would mean more to me than playing for England," says the man who has spent 12 years at the Victoria Ground.

This is his testimonial year and manager Richie Barker says: "That comment is just what I would expect from Alan. He is one of football's gentlemen. In all those 12 years, I don't suppose that he has had a cross word with any manager at this club."

"You know that he is always going to be in the right place at the right time, both on the pitch and off it. He is the kind of professional who gives the game dignity."

But manager Barker says this at a time when the veteran of almost 400 first team matches disagrees with him over his current role in the Stoke team!

"I don't think that I am doing myself justice playing in midfield. I am certain that defence is my best position," he states.

Then Dodd quickly adds: "But that is not for me to say. If the manager thinks I'm helping the side best where I am, then that is where I'm happy to play."

After a year's apprenticeship, this hometown player has spent the last 11 years as a full professional, starting his first team career the season after Stoke's League Cup victory in 1972.

"Missing that and the last nine years without a major honour has been my one disappointment in the game," he says.

"That is why winning something now would mean more to me than an England cap to follow the six I won at Under-23 level."

"And, although our First Division position at the moment does not look too clever, I would fancy our chances strongly with just a couple more players."

"The difference now between

winning and losing is so small. In our case, perhaps no more than two new players and just a little more luck. That is why I don't believe we should start worrying too much about our current position in the table."

"A lot of good things are happening at Stoke. So much is being written about Lee Chapman and Adrian Heath because of their form this season — but this is overshadowing the performances of Paul Bracewell and Peter Griffiths."

"To my mind, they are

Barker has changed the heavily attacked image of Stoke. From last season's effectively defensive style under Alan Durban, they are now seeking to win by entertaining football. But Alan Dodd isn't too sure about the trend.

"Okay, so we had a bad Press last season. But at least we were getting publicity because of our results. Entertaining is important but winning games even more so."

"Richie Barker has produced some exciting ideas but we need to be more consistent to make them work as he intends. When

DODD'S DILEMMA -where to play for Stoke



tremendous prospects as well. Paul is injecting drive and determination to our midfield. He never stops working and you can look at him now, with just over 50 First Division matches, and predict that he will play for England.

"Peter's progress this season has been brilliant. He started with just ten games to his credit but is now a vital part of the team. He looks a superb player going forward and there is no doubt that his flair for attack is the strength of his game."

This more positive, progressive style demanded by manager

we do that — plus those couple of players I've talked about — Stoke will take a lot of stopping."

Few men in football merit a testimonial season more than Dodd. He will be announcing plans shortly for a showpiece match and at least half a dozen other functions are being arranged.

In between making arrangements and maintaining individual form of the highest quality, this player-with-a-difference is quietly entering the stately home stakes . . . at least on a modest scale.

"My wife Elaine and I have spent the last two years renovating a three-storey Jacobean farmhouse near Leek. It is a huge property and was almost a ruin before we moved in. It's going to take years yet, but when it is finished, it should be a very special home indeed," he says with pride.

Peter Griffiths, one of Stoke's promising youngsters, heads home against Swansea.

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MANCHESTER UNITED



BACK ROW (left to right): Nicki Jovanovic, Gary Bailey, Paddy Roche,
Gordon McQueen.
INSETS: Remi Moses and Bryan Robson.

MIDDLE ROW: Mike Duxbury, Jimmie
McGravie, Frank Stapleton, Kevin M
(asst. manager).